

SUMMER BODY SHORTCUTS

COVER MODEL BUTT & THIGH SCULPT

Women's health & fitness

Australia

NOVEMBER 2015
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The Social issue

GUILT-FREE PARTY FOOD

- Cupcakes
- Bread
- Doughnuts
- (Oh and wine)



[**PERFECT
SELFIES**
Simple
beauty tricks]

Instagrammers'
**REAL FOOD
DIARIES**
#fitspo
before & after

6

**MOVE
TONING
CIRCUIT**

**BIKINI
CHALLENGES**
RATED

**HOW COOL
ARE YOU?**

The grown-up
popularity code

VOLUME 21 No. 11
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YOUR GOAL THIS MONTH IS CONSISTENCY.

Give yourself a break and create your own secret plan of attack, ready to maintain momentum over the winter months. Aim to tick off:

- 20 fitness sessions
- 4 stretching/yoga sessions
- 4 x 40+ minute quality cardio sessions
- 2 family/friends date sessions
- 4 new sessions.

Remember, you don't need fancy equipment; you can do the lot with resistance bands, a bar chair and a sturdy beam to use as a bar for your pull-ups!

EXERCISE TARGET MUSCLES HOW-TO

PULL UP/ CHIN UP

CHEST PRESS

The standing chest press strengthens the chest muscles, the pectoralis major and minor, as well as the front fibres of the deltoid shoulder muscle.

?

• Attach the centre of the band to a stationary object and hold one end in each hand.

• Stand with your back to the attachment, elbows bent and shoulders abducted to 90 degrees (upper arm level with shoulder) so that your hands are next to your chest.

• Push forwards and straighten your arms out in front of you.

• Slowly return to the starting position.

?

The best way to get better at pull-ups is to do pull-ups. Here is how with our bands: assisted with resistance bands – add these steps Loop a band over the pull-up bar. Place a foot or knee in the band. Complete pull-ups as normal. Step down carefully and release yourself from the bar. Step one foot out first to avoid snap backs.

- Doing a pull-up: Tighten your butt and your abs throughout the entire exercise – try not to swing, so slow down the movement. Keep your shoulder blades pinched together and focus on PULLING the bar down with your arms.
- Use the least amount of assistance that you can handle. If you're using an exercise band, try to get a few bands of varying tension so you can decrease the distance as you get stronger. Soon as you can do three of eight with assistance, move on up and either increase the resistance bands or trying unassisted. As soon as you can try one assisted then go to two, it's a great way to progress.
- Once you have mastered the pull-up, you can move onto more reps and variations such as wide-grip and weighted.

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November 2015



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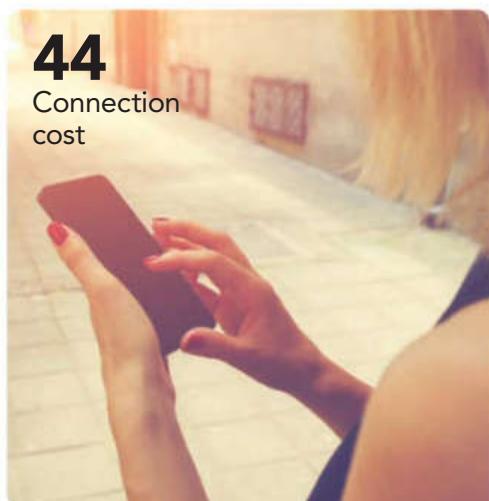
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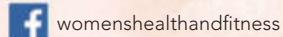
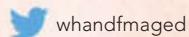
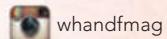
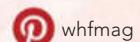
natural as, well, standing in a public place holding a plastic stick with a phone on the end and pretending not to notice the camera. Who doesn't want to know how Insta-celebs Emily Skye and Amanda Bisk got their famous bodies (or why they never seem to look bloated)? If you don't, gloss over the six pages from p. 100. But this issue's social media focus isn't all 'spo; the serious side is the impact this brave new world is having on our wellbeing. I do worry that the democratisation of publishing and apparent realness of heavily edited *life porn* makes it near impossible not to compare oneself to ideals. In fact, a recent attempt at making a photo-worthy smoothie left me with what I can only call brekkie dysmorphia (forgetting that I don't have a thousand-buck blender, DSLR or spare 45 minutes to play with saturation... epic failure, right?). But I do feel better after reading our spiel on what it means to be cool in adult-ville (p. 30), and I've got to tell you that despite looking like something from *Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles*, my smoothie tasted delicious. Actually, offline, life's pretty good. I think that still matters.

Wishing you an inspired month,

Rebecca

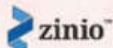
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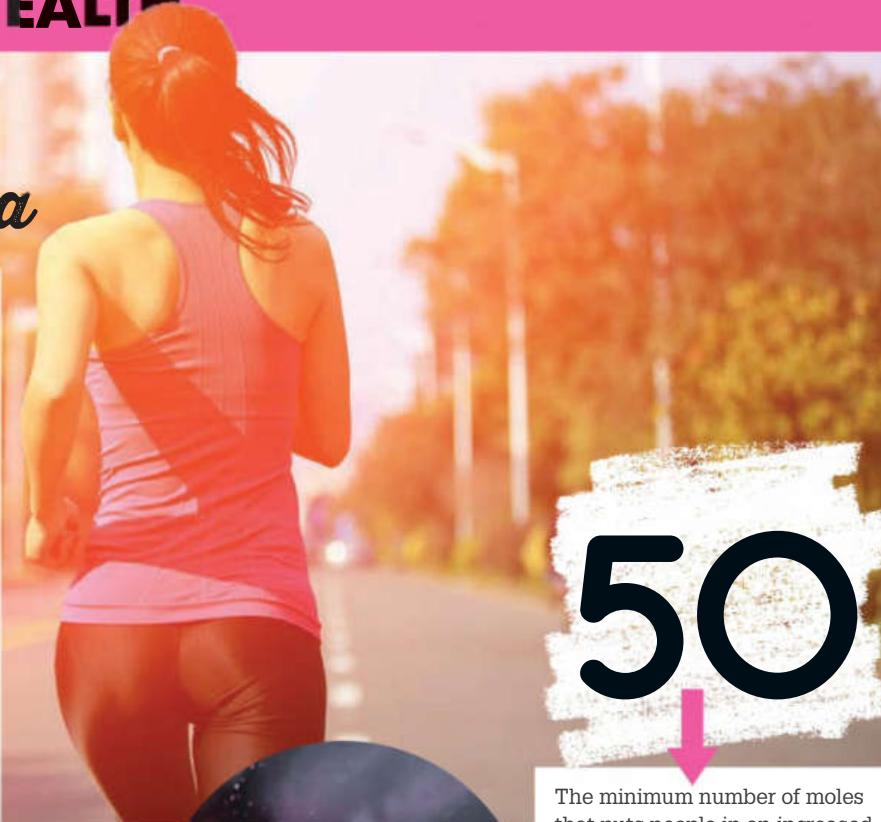


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[CONDITION REPORT]

Acne Mechanica

- ▶ **WHAT IT IS** A form of acne that can occur under athletic equipment or tight-fitting clothing.
- ▶ **WHY YOU GET IT** Acne mechanica typically develops in warm, moist environments – especially areas prone to friction.
- ▶ **LOOKS LIKE** Wearing tight-fitting exercise shorts made of non-breathable fabrics can even cause acne flare-ups on the buttocks.
- ▶ **FEELS LIKE** Unremarkable. Looks worse.
- ▶ **TREATMENT** Changing to looser workout wear and wearing breathable, moisture-wicking fabrics can help. Stubborn cases may require prescription medication.



50

The minimum number of moles that puts people in an increased risk category for melanoma – the deadliest form of skin cancer. But those with fewer moles may be diagnosed with more aggressive melanoma according to new research presented to the American Academy of Dermatology. While vigilance by those with more moles may contribute to earlier detection, there are biological differences between those with high and low mole counts, Harvard Medical School dermatologist Caroline C. Kim, MD said. Those with fewer moles may be more prone to aggressive melanoma types.

BUBBLE TROUBLE

Bad news for spring racing: fresh research has linked drinking a single glass of vino a day with increased risk of alcohol-related cancers including breast cancer according to *The BMJ*. Known alcohol-related cancers include cancer of the colorectum, female breast, liver, oral cavity, pharynx, larynx and oesophagus. One standard drink is roughly a small (118 ml) glass of wine or 355 ml of beer.



Short shift

If your go-to party shoe is a five-inch toppler, you might

be at greater risk of preterm birth.

That's the conclusion of a collaborative study directly linking a mother's height to the risk of shorter pregnancy. In a March of Dimes Foundation study of 3,485 women, maternal height was said to shape the foetal environment, influencing the length of pregnancy and frequency of prematurity.

Babies born early are more likely to suffer breathing problems, jaundice, vision loss, cerebral palsy and intellectual delays.



Melanoma ABC

While the Academy recommends regular self-exams, these melanoma hallmarks should ring alarm bells:

- **Asymmetry:** One half of the mole is unlike the other.
- **Border:** The mole's border is irregular, scalloped or poorly defined.
- **Colour:** The colour of the mole varies from one area to another.
- **Diameter:** The mole's diameter is larger than 6 mm (the size of a pencil eraser).
- **Evolving:** The mole's size, shape or colour changes over time.



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THE PULSE / NUTRITION



SATURATION POINT

Snacking on cakes, biscuits and pastries and downing full-cream lattes could cause a type of white blood cell to migrate into the tissue of vital organs, causing tissue damage and inflammation, according to a study damning saturated fat. While high-blood-saturated-fat levels can be genetic, they can also be caused by consistently eating fatty foods. People with certain immune disorders affecting monocytes (a white cell type) tend to have exceptionally high saturated fats in their blood, experts noted.



LEXICON

The Maillard Reaction

A chemical reaction between amino acids and reducing sugars that gives browned foods their desirable flavour. That's among the chief reasons for adding sugar to food products according to a University of Minnesota report in *Comprehensive Reviews in Food Science and Food Safety*. It's integral to caramelisation, which is used to produce lollies and jams and requires sugar. The Maillard reaction also provides desirable flavour formation in foods such as baked goods, chocolate, coffee and meat.



83.8%

The percentage of smart herb Gingko biloba supplements that actually contained Gingko in a study assessing product authenticity published in journal *Genome*. DNA testing of the supplement, which is marketed on cognition enhancement merits, couldn't determine whether the Gingko was destroyed by drying at high temperatures or whether it never existed. Supplements mislabelled due to incorrect identification by suppliers or substitution with cheaper ingredients could contain toxic ingredients, the author said. A reminder to only buy supplements from trusted brands.

75g

The portion size of steak associated with lower levels of arterial stiffness according to a study finding that foods rich in amino acids – the constituents of protein – could be as good for your heart as upping the exercise ante or quitting smoking. Researchers at the University of East Anglia (UEA) found that animal sources were linked to lower levels of arterial stiffness while plant-based amino sources were associated with lower blood pressure. Half a litre of skim milk nets the same amino quotient. Researchers didn't note how often you'd need to eat said steak or nominate plant source portions.



Smart food

Forget smart drugs. You may be able to boost mental performance by chowing down on spuds, rice and tea. In a small study, healthy people given 800 mg of amino acid GABA – found in potatoes, polished rice and tea – exhibited better planning performance, psychologists reported in *Scientific Reports*.

People in situations demanding rapid inhibition of one response and substitution of another action such as driving a car could benefit from consuming more GABA, researchers said.



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THE STICK

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Although your healthy intentions may be there at the beginning of your menu perusal, they're usually gone faster than you can say "pepperoni, extra cheese".



LEXICON

Sacha Inchi Seeds

The sacha inchi seed, often called the 'mountain peanut' or 'Inca peanut', is essentially a legume that bears some similarities to (you guessed it) peanuts. They're most commonly found in the Amazon Rainforest in Peru, but it seems that they're making their way into the Western palate too – quite possibly because of their high protein content and abundance of omega-3s and antioxidants.

Try it: IsoWhey Sacha Inchi Seeds with sea salt, \$12.95 for 150 g, isowhey.com.au

MEAT SNACKS

Move over muesli bar – we're following the US' lead into meat snacks. Its protein quotient means greater satiety. Translation: fewer intra-meal snacks. According to research by Innova Market Insights, snacks such as jerky, biltong and salami are gaining popularity due to their high protein content, which is lacking in most savoury snacks. A recent study in the *International Journal of Sport Nutrition and Exercise Metabolism* found that beef jerky could be used as a post-workout snack without concern for hydration status or performance or cardiovascular function as previous research had found.

QUICK
FIX

THE FIX



A little nudge in the right direction courtesy of dietitian Dr Joanna McMillan and Menulog. According to McMillan, she (like a fair few of us) orders takeaway at least once a fortnight and knows all too well that picking nutritious meals isn't easy. As a result, she's helped Menulog single out meals that have loads of vegetables, smart carbs, lean protein and good fats, and marked them with a 'healthy+' symbol. Visit menulog.com.au



Up hydration

The dehydrating effect of alcohol can turn the social season into one long drought for your cells and skin. Coffee and cola are similarly offensive. Consider augmenting your diary commitments with extra H2O harm minimisation. If you're a hater or tend to drink diet soft drink for a hit of flavour, infuse your tap drop with fruit or veggies. Annabel Trends' Watermate Infuser has a removable infusion rod for your lemon, lime or cucumber. \$15.95 at annabeltrends.com

FOODIE CHEAT

If you're practising mindful eating and want a quick hack to help you appreciate the flavour and reach satisfaction sooner, trade up your utensils. Heavier cutlery could foster positive appraisals of taste and presentation according to new research at Oxford University. In the study of 130 people, half were asked to eat a meal with fancy cutlery while the other half used light and bendy utensils to eat the same meal. Subjects who used the fancy cutlery reported higher flavour and presentation ratings than cheap cutlery peers. Lead researcher Charles Michel attributes the effect to heavier cutlery's guidance of awareness to the sensory pleasures of eating.



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HARDWIRED HUNGER

Normal-weight person sees food porn. Fantasises about food. Obese person sees food porn. Needs food. The reason according to scientists behind the new finding is that food craving activates different brain networks in obese candidates. Testing the contentious theory that brain mechanisms in obesity may be similar to those in substance abusers, researchers at Spain's University of Granada and Melbourne's Monash University found differences in reward circuitry response to food pics. By logging brain setup, experts could predict 11 per cent of obese subjects' weight gain over three months. It wasn't clear whether hardwiring caused obesity or obesity caused changes in the way the brain responds to food.



The stick: Struggling to stop at a single portion of pasta/risotto/apple crumble

The fix: Drink 500 ml of still water half an hour before your main meal. Experts at the University of Birmingham found that the simple intervention could help obese people to lose weight. In a 12-week study, those who preloaded with water before one main meal a day lost an average of 1.3 kg more than control participants while those who preceded three meals a day with H2O lost 4.3 kg more over the 12 weeks.

Mindful eating 2.0

Just when you thought it was safe to ditch sitting down and paying attention to your food – surely the mindful eating moment has passed? – a study has found that eating while walking could lead to increased food intake later in the day. According to the *Journal of Health Psychology*, dieters ate five times more chocolate at a taste test after eating a cereal bar while walking than those who ate a bar while eating with the tele on or chatting. The jury's out on why, but researchers suggest that it may be because walking disrupts our ability to process the impact eating has on hunger or because our brains log walking as a form of exercise, justifying a subsequent splurge.



DOES EXERCISE HELP WITH WEIGHT LOSS?

Not according to public health scientists at Loyola University Chicago: Stritch School of Medicine. The calorie-burning clout of exercise is often cancelled by compensatory eating due to activity-related appetite increases, researchers said. They suggested that the exercise-equals-weight loss message was a serial marketing ploy by the food industry and promoted eating fewer calories as the only effective weight-loss tactic.



Hangry housewives

A tiff with your significant other could trigger floods of appetite-triggering hormones according to a study published in journal *Clinical Psychological Science*. Normal-weight and overweight women and men had higher amounts of hunger hormone ghrelin after an argument while a bit of biffo didn't seem to affect obese subjects. Hostile arguments were also related to poor food choices, possibly due to the 'comfort food' effect, researchers suggested. The strong correlation didn't prove cause and effect, but hey, no harm in marriage counselling.

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THE PULSE / EXERCISE



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4.5%

THE IMPROVEMENT IN FIVE-KILOMETRE RUN TIME AFTER FOUR WEEKS OF SPRINT INTERVAL TRAINING ACCORDING TO A NEW STUDY PUBLISHED IN THE JOURNAL OF STRENGTH AND CONDITIONING RESEARCH. THIS MEANS THAT SPRINTS ARE A TIME-EFFICIENT WAY TO IMPROVE EXERCISE PERFORMANCE.

TRY IT: The study asked participants (in this case, untrained young men) to do eight sprints at all-out intensity, three times a week for four weeks. 5k, here we come!

HAPPY INSTINCTS

It turns out that there might be more to runner's high than just endorphins.

A new study published in *Cell Metabolism* found that leptin, i.e. the satiety hormone, may have a role to play in exercise-induced bliss. "Our findings now show that this hormone plays a vital role in motivation to run, which may be related to searching for food," says researcher Stephanie Fulton. "Previous studies have clearly shown a correlation between leptin levels and marathon run times. We speculate that, for humans, falling leptin may increase stamina and the rewarding effects of running as an adaptive means to enhance the pursuit and procurement of food."

OLD VS NEW

Still trying to find ways to master your exercise mojo in time for summer? Try changing up your approach:

OLD MOJO: Execution habit

This means you have an exact routine you follow when you go to the gym, like a circuit or weights program. The theory is this makes it easier to commit to workouts.

NEW MOJO: Instigation habit

Developing an instigation habit is all about instilling cues that prompt you to automatically go to the gym. New research from Iowa State University says that these internal cues mean people go to the gym more frequently and make the habit of exercising harder to break – while allowing you to try a greater variety of workouts in the gym.

TRY IT: "The most common cues used with interventions are external, such as the alarm clock going off in the morning," says researcher Alison Phillips. "But internal cues, such as a feeling that you need to move after sitting for hours at your desk, form the strongest habits. These are harder to train and must develop over time." Phillips estimates it could take a month or longer of repeated behaviour before a cue reliably and automatically triggers gym-going, but sticking with the same time of day is a good way to start.

ICE, ICE...MAYBE

A freezing bath after a hard training session might assist your recovery short term, but new research has shown it might be interfering with your muscle development. New research from the University of Queensland has found that, after acute strength exercise, cold water immersion can delay or inhibit satellite cell activity and suppress the activation of an enzyme important to muscle growth and strength development. Translation: all pain, no gain. In one of the supporting studies, the size of the muscle fibres was shown to increase significantly for subjects using active recovery, but not at all for those using cold-water immersion – we know which one we'll be doing.



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THE FIX: Cover and treat fungal nail at the same time by using TLC Nails base coat with your favourite polish. It contains undecenoic acid, a known antifungal agent, and is free from polish chemical nasties such as formaldehyde, toluene and DBP. \$25 at tlcnails.com.au



33%

The percentage of women who rarely or never apply sunscreen to their back according to a recent survey conducted by the American Academy of Dermatology. What's worse is that 40 per cent of women rarely or never asked for someone to apply it for them! In order to remedy this wrong, the Academy (and WH&F) are asking you to "Find a partner in skin cancer prevention" and ask "Who's got your back?" when it comes to soaking up sunshine. But seriously: tans are temporary, sun damage is forever.

shimmer

YOU KNOW YOU WANT TO

Moisturiser? Puh-lease, that's so last season. Boost your almost-summer glow with Anise's Shimmering Body Milk. It's brimming with skin-nourishing ingredients like sweet almond oil, shea butter and jojoba, with the oh-so-summery scent of Italian Neroli oil. \$34.95 for 200 ml, aniseskin.com



SCENTS AND SENSIBILITY

Try this trio of natural perfumes with organic ingredients for a fragrance without the fuss (and by fuss, we mean the mile-long, chemical-packed list on the label).

1. JASMINE LOVES MINT – The Little Alchemist

Bergamot, blood orange and wild mint bring herbal balance to a triple whammy of jasmine essences – think warm spring days. \$60 for 5 ml at thelittlealchemist.com.au

2. BOHEMIA – One Seed

Amber, smoked tea and dark chocolate contrast with sweeter aromatics like blood orange and vanilla – they call it 'gourmand amber oriental'. \$75 for 30 ml at oneseedperfumes.com

3. HAWAIIAN FLOWER LEI PURFUME OIL – OneSelf

Gardenia and frangipani blended with tuberose and organic coconut oil – this fragrance is meant to take you beachside. \$117 for 10ml at runway2street.com

Cellulite solutions

WE TALKED TO DR LI-CHUEN WONG, CONSULTANT DERMATOLOGIST AT SYDNEY SKIN NEWTOWN ABOUT WHAT YOU CAN (OR RATHER CAN'T) DO ABOUT BUTT DIMPLES.

TRICK: MASSAGE

TRUTH: "Massage may temporarily remove excess fluid, giving cellulite a better appearance, but the effects are short-lived."

TRICK: LIFESTYLE

TRUTH: "Exercising, along with eating healthily, will minimise the extent of [cellulite's] appearance."

TRICK: ANTI-CELLULITE CREAMS

TRUTH: "Unfortunately, there is no scientific evidence that anti-cellulite creams are at all effective," Dr Wong says. "It's not possible for the ingredients to penetrate deep enough into the fat layer."

Delicious Taste!
No added sugar

Collagen Support for Hair, Skin and Nails

100% Australian-grown Cherries

Our new formula is full of sun drenched, whole fruit 100% Australian-grown Cherries (rich in natural antioxidants), Silica and Vitamin C to support healthy hair, skin and nails.

Collagen Support

Collagen is important for beautiful skin, healthy, glossy hair and strong nails and to help reduce the visible signs of ageing. Collagen can become damaged by free radicals through stress, pollution and exposure to chemicals (eg. household cleaning products and pesticides in our food). The good news is that strong antioxidant activity can help reduce collagen breakdown.

Science meets Nature

Great tasting Blooms Hair, Skin & Nails is specially formulated with Australian Cherry, colloidal Silica and Vitamin C to assist collagen production and provide essential nutrients to support healthy hair, skin and nails.



No added sugars, artificial flavours or colours.
Vegetarian and vegan friendly.

AVAILABLE NOW at leading pharmacies and health food stores.

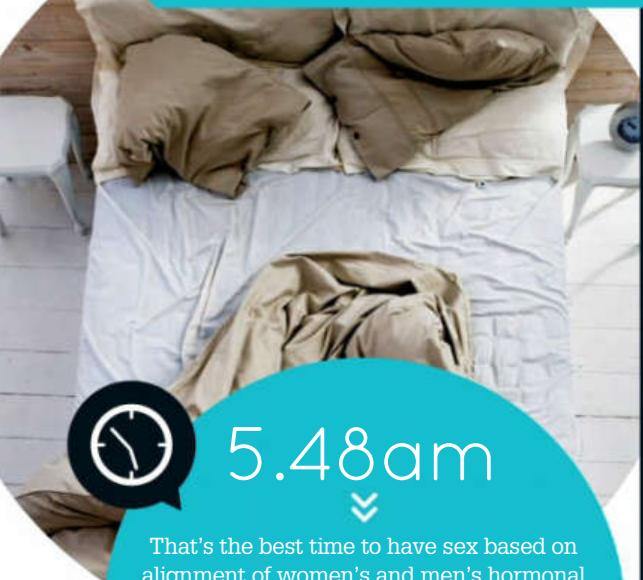
Always read the label, use only as directed.

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blooms
HEALTH PRODUCTS

THE PULSE / SEX & LOVE



5.48am

That's the best time to have sex based on alignment of women's and men's hormonal profiles. Men's testosterone is elevated after an overnight surge and sunlight boosts both partners' testosterone, which is integral to desire. Women's levels of sleep hormone melatonin have dropped by sunrise. Italian research also suggests that early sessions are most likely to result in orgasm.



The proportion of young breast cancer sufferers who eschewed taking tamoxifen, which is known to reduce recurrence incidence, due to fertility concerns according to a study published in the *Journal of the National Cancer Institute*. Women taking tamoxifen are warned against pregnancy because of the high potential for harm to the baby. Concerns about side effects were also among primary factors influencing medication use.

e-Male ROMANTICS

Pouring your heart out via voicemail may be less effective than sending a love interest an email according to research published in *Computers in Human Behavior*. In the psychophysiological study of emotional responses to contemporary forms of communication, people who sent romantic emails were more emotionally aroused and used stronger and more thoughtful language than those who left voicemails. Emailers added more positive content to their messages, perhaps to compensate for the medium's inability to convey vocal tone, experts wrote. It challenges the so-called media naturalness theory, which posits that the further we get away from face-to-face communications, the less natural and less effective it becomes. (Plus, you can't delete an accidental L word on voicemail.)

LEXICON

FEMALE SEXUAL FUNCTION INDEX

A 19-question form used to measure women's sexual problems, including issues with pain, orgasm, arousal and desire. Two questions ask women to rank the level and frequency of their libido in the last month. Little known fact: the questionnaire, used to diagnose low libido as a medicalised sexual problem, was funded by two pharmaceutical giants and integral to the FDA's recent approval of the first pill for women suffering loss of sexual appetite, which can only be measured by self-reporting, unlike functional sexual disorders such as impotence in men. 'Nuff said.



[WANTED] GSOH

If you LOL and LMFAO at a potential mate's jokes, you're more likely to make a romantic match. So concludes new research at the University of Kansas. The more times a woman laughs at a bloke's attempts at humour, the more likely it is that she'll be interested in dating according to Associate Professor of Communication Studies Jeffrey Hall. Laughing together predicted mutual interest. He explains the romantic gravity of a GSOH.

» HUMOUR POINTS TO HAVING A SOCIALE AND AGREEABLE PERSONALITY.

"Part of what it means to be social is the ability to joke along with people," Hall said.

» MEN USE HUMOUR TO GAUGE IF WOMEN ARE INTERESTED IN THEM.

"Men are trying to get women to show their cards," Hall said. "For some men it is a conscious strategy."

» WHEN MEN MAKE JOKES AND WOMEN LAUGH, THEY MAY BE PERFORMING A SCRIPT IN COURTSHIP.

Men acting like jokers and women laughing along may be part of it, too. "The script is powerful and it is enduring, and it dictates everything from asking someone out to picking up the tab," Hall said.

» HUMOUR IS VALUABLE FOR HUMOUR'S SAKE.

"Shared laughter might be a pathway toward developing a more long-lasting relationship," Hall said.



Answer: C

Question:

Where do women have the most sweat glands?

Yes we know, it's an intimate subject but there's no getting around the fact that you have more sweat glands in your intimate area than under your arms. No wonder those intense workout sessions can lead to that "yucky" unpleasant experience. And if you struggle with this feeling you are not alone, did you know that over 22% of Australian women experience intimate odour daily?

Vagisil Fresh Plus Intimate Wash is the only intimate wash formulated with Odour Control Protection that ingeniously stops odour before it starts by working directly on odour molecules, making sure they don't come into contact with air. Instead of masking odour with "flowery" fragrances, Vagisil actually prevents it and leaves you feeling clean, fresh and confident.

So the only thing you have to worry about when you hit the gym, is exceeding your P.B.

For more information from the intimate health experts visit Vagisil.com



GET MORE FROM YOUR WASH


Your intimate health experts.

*Feminine Symptom Incidence Study, Australia 2013



IT'S A THING

SELF SPO

Social media connections who log their every move without commenting on anyone else's mightn't be uncaring – they could just get really psyched about their own experiences. A new study shows that people with power – defined as the capacity to influence others while being relatively immune to influence – draw inspiration from themselves rather than others. In a series of studies published in *Social Psychological and Personality Science*, powerful participants were more inspired by their own stories than by those of their conversation partner, whereas less powerful people were equally inspired by themselves as by their partner. It may be that the self-prioritising is part of their modus operandi or powerful people may find it hard to acknowledge others' superior qualities.

QUICK FIX

TO FIND CREATIVE SOLUTIONS

Feel entitled

THE STICK

Gen Y's 'the world owes me' 'tude is the bane of non-millennials, but a little bit of deservedness can boost creativity according to a study published in the *Journal of Experimental Social Psychology*. People with 'state' entitlement – less permanent than hardwired 'trait' entitlement – valued being different and therefore sought divergent solutions to challenges, researchers suggested. Trait entitlement, which is associated with narcissism and antisocial behaviours such as rule breaking, was not linked to greater creativity.

THE FIX

Write sentences about why you deserve various positive outcomes on your wish list. (And stop preceding emails and phone calls with 'just'. It's a redundant apology that reinforces the notion that you're indebted.)

Log your steps and latte calories without killing your #bosslady look with Misfit's discreet Shine activity tracker nested in a necklace. It also logs sleep and doesn't need charging. (Exactly like hiding zucchini in cake.) \$69 (tracker); \$49 (cord), misfit.com

5 ways to win friends and influence people

CHASING YOUR FIVE MINUTES OF INSTAGRAM FAME? WHETHER YOU'RE USING THE PLATFORM FOR BUSINESS OR PERSONAL BRANDING (OR TO FLAUNT YOUR FIT-HOT ABS...SIGH), NETIQUETTE IS KEY TO YOUR FOLLOWER COUNT.

1 Finish your bio and don't spare the relevant keywords and hashtags. Also include a link to your website or blog.

2 Like as many pictures from people in your target audience as possible. One case study showed that the tactic garnered six followers for each 100 likes.

3 Follow people who follow those you aspire to be like. Like their photos and leave meaningful comments (but don't get spammy or stalkerish). It will make them look at your account.

4 Define scope for your images and keep primarily on-theme for concentrated appeal to your target followers and to keep existing ones on side. If they're following because of your awesome food shots, a run of gardening selfies is junk mail. Apply the same rigour to image quality, which is not only crucial for getting likes and followers, but reflects your brand.

5 If you're not ready for a third-party post-production app, use Instagram's Mayfair filter, which was considered most effective by marketers in TrackMaven's Fortune 500 Instagram report.

Dear @that_space, thrilled that you've found such fame among buzzword enthusiasts, but please get out of our conversations already. #buzzworddetox

Naturally Bronzed & Beautiful

Our natural sugar derived active ingredient will give you a beautiful golden tan in just 4 hours.

SELF-TANNING LOTION

Ideal for the body

LAIT AUTOBRONZANT

Idéal pour le corps

LATTE AUTOABBRONZANTE

Ideale per il corpo

SELBSTBRÄUNUNGSMILCH

Ideal für den Körper

SELF-TANNING CREAM

Ideal for the face

CRÈME AUTOBRONZANTE

Idéal pour le visage

CREMA AUTOABBRONZANTE

Ideale per il viso

SELBSTBRÄUNUNGSCREME

Ideal für das Gesicht

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**QUALITY
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100% certified natural cosmetics with high-quality organic plant ingredients

100% free of silicone, paraffin, phthalate, plastic microbeads and mineral oil

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Our moisturising self-tanner has a no streak formula that lasts up to 4 days, goes on like a moisturiser and is certified Vegan and natural making it safe to use during pregnancy.



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NEUROLINGUIST

Nomophobe

Person with a fear of being without their mobile phone. Coined by Iowa State University researchers, phone dependency can lead to sleep disturbance and being that person with their phone on the table. You know who you are.



Respond to the following statements on a scale of 1 (strongly disagree) to 7 (strongly agree). A higher total score corresponded with greater severity.

A thousand sages have rephrased it, but science has revealed more proof that what we see has more to do with the mind than the eyes, suggest two studies published in *Psychological Science*. Feeling sadness may reduce the accuracy of identifying colours on the blue-yellow axis more than feeling amused or emotionally neutral because sadness impairs basic visual processes involved in perceiving colour. Perception of colours on the blue-yellow axis was previously linked to reward neurotransmitter dopamine.

If I did not have my smartphone with me:

1. I would feel uncomfortable without constant access to information through my smartphone.
2. I would be annoyed if I could not look information up on my smartphone when I wanted to do so.
3. Being unable to get the news (e.g., happenings, weather, etc.) on my smartphone would make me nervous.
4. I would be annoyed if I could not use my smartphone and/or its capabilities when I wanted to do so.
5. Running out of battery in my smartphone would scare me.
6. If I were to run out of credits or hit my monthly data limit, I would panic.
7. If I did not have a data signal or could not connect to Wi-Fi, then I would constantly check to see if I had a signal or could find a Wi-Fi network.
8. If I could not use my smartphone, I would be afraid of getting stranded somewhere.
9. If I could not check my smartphone for a while, I would feel a desire to check it.



Fret about your step count and pulling the cat's tail when you were five? Your neuroticism might help you to write the next Harry Potter or hatch the next YouTube. **There's a functional link between neurotic unhappiness (for which Isaac Newton was famous) and creativity according to an opinion paper published in Trends in Cognitive Sciences.** The part of the brain responsible for self-generated thought is highly active in neuroticism, which yields both creativity and misery, authors argue. It challenges the most popular explanation for neuroticism, from British psychologist Jeffrey Gray, who in the 1970s proposed that neuroticism stems from a heightened sensitivity to threat.



150

Mild cognitive impairment (MCI) was 150 per cent lower in cognitively normal 65- to 84-year-olds who habitually drank coffee compared to those who never or rarely indulged according to a study in the *Journal of Alzheimer's Disease*. MCI is a level of memory loss greater than that usually experienced with ageing, but without other signs of dementia. Other studies have concluded that higher plasma caffeine levels may be protective against cognitive impairment and dementia.

5 BENEFITS OF VIDA GLOW

1. Consuming Vida Glow on a daily basis results in firmer and more hydrated skin, smoothing out fine lines and wrinkles, giving you a radiant and plump complexion.
2. As a daily collagen supplement Vida Glow rejuvenates and nourishes dry or brittle hair, adds shine, gives volume to fine hair and assists in hair growth.
3. Restoring collagen levels will encourage healthier, stronger and faster growing nails, repairing weak or damaged nails.
4. Vida Glow strengthens the collagen fibres under the skin, assisting in evening out skin tone and diminishing the appearance of cellulite.
5. Vida Glow complements your workout, by assisting in muscle repair and recovery, building lean muscle; thus helping your body achieve muscle definition and toning.



BEAUTIFUL HAIR, SKIN AND NAILS



VIDA GLOW IS A NATURAL MARINE COLLAGEN SUPPLEMENT DESIGNED TO MAINTAIN THE BUILDING BLOCKS OF HEALTHY HAIR, SKIN AND NAILS.

WHAT IS VIDA GLOW?

Vida Glow is a natural marine collagen supplement. Collagen is the most abundant protein in our bodies that is vital to maintaining healthy hair, skin, nails, muscles and connective tissues.

Vida Glow is formulated with the highest quality hydrolysed marine collagen powder. Studies have shown that hydrolysed collagen helps the body to form new collagen structure and provides the amino acid building blocks that stimulate the production of new collagen. Taken daily Vida Glow helps combat the signs of ageing, and is a natural solution to beautiful hair, skin and nails.

Vida Glow is made up of low molecular weight collagen peptide that is not only high in amino acids, but is also well absorbed in the body because of its high rate of bio availability. This ensures that the collagen ingested is delivered to the right places, in order to gain the best results.

Our Original Vida Glow is tasteless and odourless, making it ultra convenient to include into your daily diet. Simply stir one of our pre measured 3g sachets into your coffee, tea, porridge, yoghurt, smoothie or water. Or you can enjoy our refreshing Blueberry flavoured Vida Glow that comes with the added goodness of Vitamin C, Açai and Green Tea Extract.



POMP & COMFORT STANCE

Speaking of celebrations, these pom-pom flats from

Radical Yes are a solid nod to party season (fairy bread, anyone?). With a sneaker-esque padded base, they're the perfect place for your toes to seek respite after too many hours in skyscrapers (see more feet-saving tips from p. 48). Shop the range at radicalyes.com.au

Wellness, with a spin

Think hula hoops are for kids? Think again.

A recent column published in the *Journal of Emergency Nursing* found that hoop dancing was a great way of getting adults to 'play', which they say may be a way of preventing burnout and compassion fatigue in nurses. "Hoop dance classes combine circus-style hula

hoop tricks with free-form dance, which is the perfect blend of creativity, fun and fitness," says Caitlyn Woods of SpinJoy Hoop Dance. "It also has a meditative quality, something I feel to be based on the connectedness

you need to tune into with your entire body to support the rotating force around you."

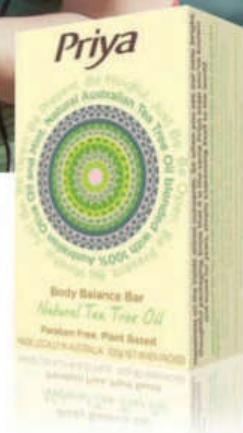
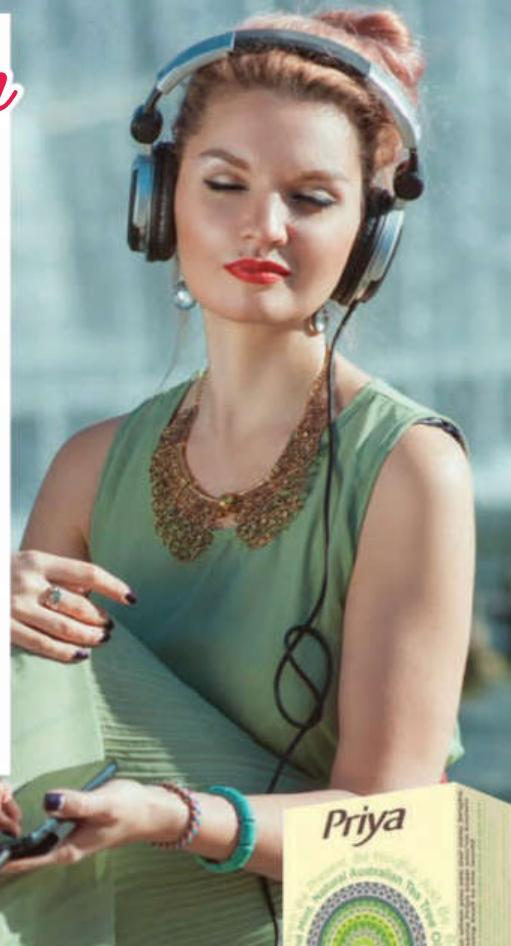
Spinjoy runs classes in cities across Australia; for more info visit spinjoy.com.au.

LEXICON

Musical frisson

Also known as 'skin orgasms', musical frisson is a physical reaction to an emotional response to music stimulus: your hairs standing on end, chills/shivers, tingling or even tears. A recent study published in *Frontiers in Psychology* called it "a transcendent, psychophysiological moment of musical experience". While your own preferences and emotional connections to music will determine whether or not you'll experience musical frisson, studies have proposed that the onset of unexpected harmonies and sudden changes from soft to loud sounds (think the 'drop' in dance music) are common catalysts of frisson.

TRY IT? Science writer David Robson recently explored musical frisson (but he prefers 'skin orgasms'), and has kindly created a YouTube playlist. Find it at [youtube.com/user/davidarobson/playlists](https://www.youtube.com/user/davidarobson/playlists)



SOAP PERFORMANCE

Add this to the list of soap KPIs: eschews palm oil, which is responsible for widespread deforestation in many countries. (Number one is creamy lather, obviously.) Priya, which means 'beloved' in Sanskrit, uses only sustainably sourced palm oil to make their Natural Tea Tree Oil Body Balance Bar. It's paraben free and plant based. \$1.99 at Woolworths.

“
WHAT IF
instead of
striving for love,
you were willing
to have
*gratitude and
caring for others*
without judgment
or offence?
”

says Dr Dain Heer (drdainheer.com), author of *Being You, Changing the World*.

According to Heer, the socially acceptable idea of love that many are pursuing – you know... Prince Charming, white picket fences, lots of flowers, etc – can be false and sometimes destructive. "Love means something different to every one of us," he says. "It is impossible to determine; impossible to find. Strive instead to be grateful, caring and completely accepting of yourself and those around you."

A woman with blonde hair, wearing a white tank top and denim shorts, is smiling and holding a hat. A large black circle containing the text "YOUR BEST LOVE IT" is overlaid on the right side of the image.

YOUR BEST
LOVE IT



cool factor

The digital lifescape is changing what it means to be popular. But despite appearances buoyed by impressive friend counts, what qualifies as cool in the real world remains hard to fake.

Words: Bronte Chaperon



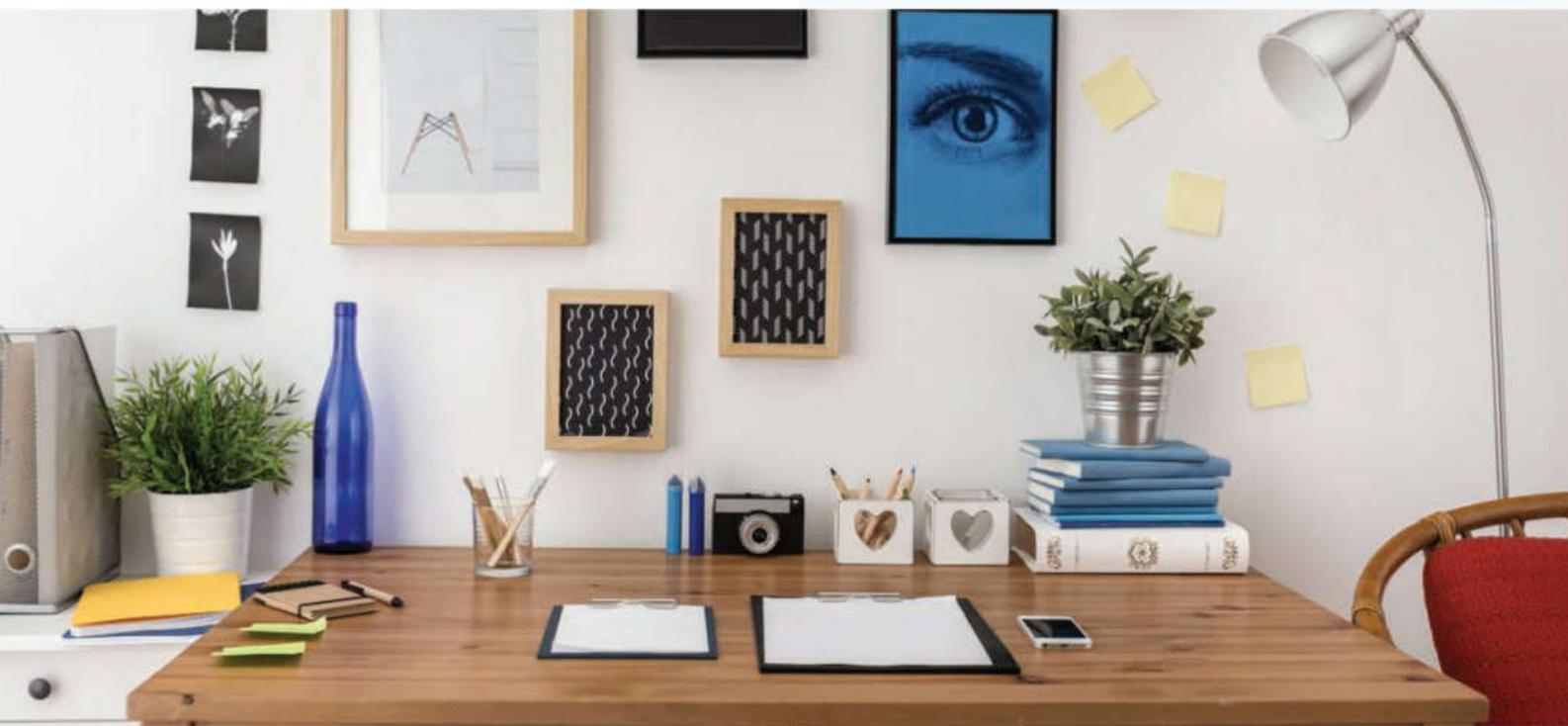
In high school, the epitome of compliments was only two words long – ‘you’re cool’. You know cool, a desired and idealised person who reeked of edginess. The cool kid in your high school may’ve been the oh-so-suave (and let’s face it, completely clichéd) jock with floppy hair and shoulders to rival Chris Pratt’s, or it may’ve been the vacuous, outgoing girl (the kind that high school movies make millions off of) that you rolled your eyes at, but secretly wanted to be. Either way, it’s likely that your idea of cool has morphed. What’s cool past 25 may be more focused on behaviour or personality traits rather than physical attractiveness. Brains, authenticity, worldliness or the ability to quote hilarious *The Office* references at dinner parties may be much more revered than rebellious backchat. While your idea of what is cool may have changed, does the concept of cool still exist into your 30s, or do we all have better things to worry about?

According to a study published in the *Journal of Individual Differences*, cool still exists in the real, undigitised adult world – it’s just a bit different to the brand that defined the playground queen bee. The study suggests that our notion of cool changes as we get older, with most of us reaching a common conception of cool – grown-up version. Yet when it comes to articulating the characteristics that make us deem a person cool – which is generally assumed to be synonymous with social desirability – things are less clear-cut. Even more confounding is why some people have an innate ‘it’ factor while others are considered cringe-worthy or even (gasp) daggy. In his paper ‘Coolness: An Empirical Investigation’, Ilan Dar-Nimrod, PhD, says that there is no consensus on adult cool. “We have a kind of a schizophrenic coolness concept in our mind. Almost any one of us will be cool in some people’s eyes, which suggests the idiosyncratic way coolness is evaluated. But some will be judged as cool in many people’s eyes, which suggests there is a core valuation to coolness.” In several studies conducted by Dar-Nimrod and his team, it was discovered that the traits considered socially desirable were “sociability, positivity, intelligence and valued physical characteristics”. This kind of cool is known as ‘cachet coolness’ – where pro-social values take dominance over traditional ‘contrarian coolness’ (think: rebellious, rough, James Dean in *Rebel Without A Cause*). Other adjectives participants used frequently to describe cool were friendliness/social, personal competence/successful, and trendiness/hip, with participants favouring socially desirable traits over traditionally cool traits in an 8:3 ratio. Prevalent contrarian coolness characteristics

mentioned were thrill seeking, hedonism and unconventionality. So now we have the idea that current coolness combines sociability with boldness, but why do we want to be considered cool anyway? Dar-Nimrod explains that if a culture values certain traits more than others, it will influence our behaviour by encouraging us to adjust to the social norm, creating a culture that idealises those considered to represent the certain desired behaviours most. So that explains our desire to be a delight... All. The. Damn. Time.

Becoming cool

Have you ever tried to seem cool to a group of people and failed miserably? You know, such as trying to act effortlessly suave at a classy dinner party, circulating your red wine and doing your best ‘I-woke-up-like-this’ strut and then tripped over and spilled your drink on the host’s carpet, humiliating yourself into next year? Well, trying to act cool has a lot more impact on you than you think. Hilarious anecdotes aside, spending your effort trying to be cool can have a number of harmful effects on your emotional and social health. Depression and anxiety are just two consequences those desperately trying to be seen as cool may experience if they allow being cool to take priority in their lives – even if they reach cool status; exhausting themselves trying to remain and be seen as cool. In fact, exerting energy trying to be seen as cool is counter-productive on many accounts. Those seen as the modern cool – cachet coolness – demonstrate the values (such as confidence and self-reliance) of a psychological theory known as self-actualisation. Without getting too ‘high school classroom’, the lowdown on the theory, workshopped by psychologist Abraham Maslow, suggests we have an innate desire to reach our potential and do the things we love – both professionally and personally – living free of reliance on others and with a comfortable acceptance of ourselves. The theory states that self-actualisers have progressed through the ‘hierarchy of needs’ – needs comprising physiological, safety, belonging and esteem elements – and have moved on to simply enjoy their lives and live in peace feeling loved, accepted and like they are living their lives as their true selves and are “useful and necessary in the world” according to Maslow in his paper, ‘Self-Actualizing People: A Study of Psychological Health’. Those attempting to be cool are stuck in the ‘Esteem’ or ‘Belonging’ category and cannot feel authentic or accepting of themselves and therefore can’t reach a feeling of peace if they are attempting to change who they are. In addition to your mental health, your physical health may suffer as a result of trying to be cool – if you let it. Dar-Nimrod says conforming to what’s considered cool in your idealised group may sway you to take part in unhealthy behaviours. “Coolness may have some relevance to health behaviors,” says Dar-Nimrod. “Smoking or drug use, for example, could be connected with a view of coolness that includes rebelliousness or a countercultural stance. This can inform future health research on behaviours. Is coolness related to people’s choice of unhealthy behaviours, such as body modifications, unprotected sex or even eating behaviors?”



Insta hip

With the introduction of social media, now being perceived as cool has the added element of being digital – because clearly maintaining a cool aura in the physical world just isn't enough. The power of social media is undeniably growing with 74 per cent of the adult population online having a Facebook, Instagram or Twitter account in 2014. But have we become sneakily accustomed to showing only the desirable and cool part of ourselves online in an attempt to seem more trendy? Speaking to Science Daily, Senior Lecturer of the Department of Media Arts at the University of London, Victoria Mapplebeck, says we've become 'spin doctors' and want others to know what's happening in our lives. "How do we curate our lives online? How honest are we about our lives on social media? Facebook profiles and postings often seem relentlessly upbeat. We create an avatar of our lives; an avatar who is slimmer, has more friends, a better love life and a better job than we do," says Mapplebeck. The prevalence of cool online is evident; we've all seen Instagram posts of perfectly lit and angled selfies dripping with enough narcissism to rival Kim Kardashian's; we've seen organised and beautifully presented breakfasts and coffees; and let's not forget the travel photos so beautiful (and likely heavily edited and filtered) that make you scowl and close your laptop in a huff of jealousy reminiscent of your days as a surly teenager. It's fair to say it's likely we're all guilty of one of these things, but why do we do it? And why do we 'follow' and idealise people we may never have met simply because we think they're cool and hip for having attractive photos? Again, it traces back to our idealisation of what Western culture has ingrained in us as desirable. Social media, especially visual components highlighted by Instagram, encourage us to visually demonstrate and showcase our coolest and most high-achieving moments – a way to reinforce our own brand of coolness. Our desire and obsession with certain 'brands' on Instagram, for example, highlight our need to be closer to traits and elements that we feel we lack personally, and act as a method of achieving proximity to said coolness.

HISTORICALLY, COOL WAS SYNONYMOUS WITH BEING EMOTIONALLY CONTROLLED AND DISTANT, BUT INSTEAD OF BEING TODAY'S ANSWER TO OSCAR THE GROUCH, WHY NOT FOCUS ON ACCENTUATING YOUR POSITIVE CHARACTERISTICS AND BEING THE BEST AND MOST AUTHENTIC VERSION OF YOURSELF?

INSTEAD OF AIMING TO BE COOL, WHY NOT AIM TO BE:

KIND – If you need an excuse to be kind (and really, why would you?), being kind has been found to have a number of positive effects both physically and mentally. Kindness relieves stress and makes you a happier person over time. Sonja Lyubomirsky, a professor of psychology at the University of California, says "when you are kind to others, you feel good as a person – more moral, optimistic, and positive." Along with a mental boost of sunshine and reduced anxiety, being kind can also activate our good friend oxytocin. The warm and glowy feeling you receive upon doing something nice for someone causes the release of oxytocin, which then releases a chemical that dilates the blood vessels and reduces blood pressure. What a win!

NEED IDEAS?

- Buy your mum some flowers or give her a call – when was the last time you called just to see how she is?

She'll appreciate the thoughtfulness and effort you've made to stay involved in her life.

- Donate to a charity like SIDS and Kids or the Cancer Council. Better yet, if you have time, volunteer for a day. Helping others without expecting anything in return is a fantastic way to give back to the community.
- Being kind doesn't have to be a big gesture, even paying for your friend's lunch when she's having a sh*tty day will help break her slump.
- Give someone a compliment on something other than their appearance. "You're a great friend", "I love your cooking" and "You make me laugh" go a long way.

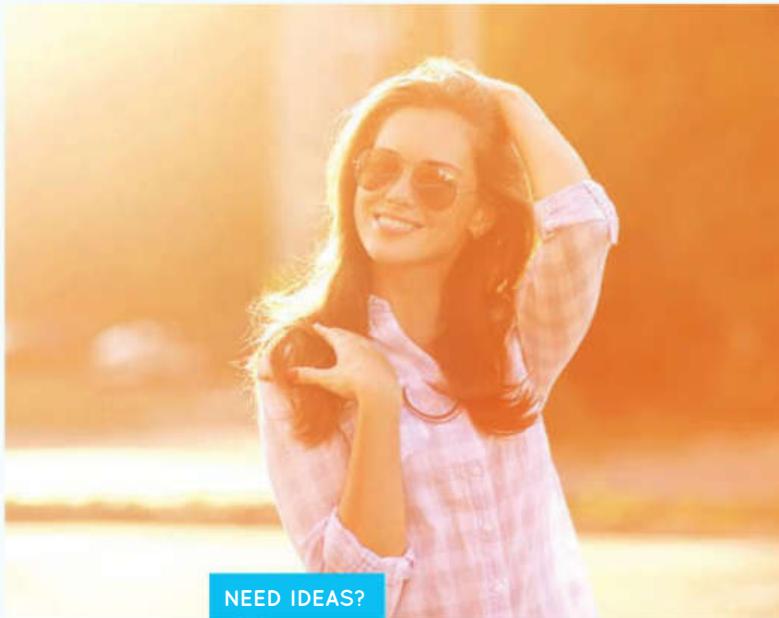
For more great ideas head to randomactsofkindness.org

HONEST – Having an honest nature reduces the anxiety in your life. Any feelings of shame, guilt or remorse are immediately removed and paves the way for a life of authenticity (all the better on our path to self-actualisation!) Additionally, honesty has also been shown to promote courage and self-acceptance.

NEED IDEAS?

- Next time someone asks you if they look big in a certain style of dress or jeans, tell them, but do it nicely. Saying something like, "Honestly, I think the pair of jeans you tried on earlier were more flattering and highlighted your busty frame; it looked fantastic," is a lot more constructive and gives your friend an honest opinion while sparing her feelings.
- If you're in a situation where you're in the wrong and someone is confronting you about it, own up to it. It's scary and you might worry the person won't forgive you, but hopefully if you apologise sincerely, explain what was going through your head at the time and don't repeat your actions, you'll be forgiven. Extra bonus points for not needing to be confronted and come clean up front.

FUNNY – Is there really anything better than a laugh so big you start crying and let out a little fart? No. No, there isn't. Having a great sense of humour is not only great for you socially, but according to a study at the University of Maryland Medical Center, an active sense of humour can help protect you against heart attacks. Other physical benefits include lower stress levels, relaxed muscles and a boosted immunity while mental benefits range from improved mood levels to enhanced resilience. Not only that, having a big laugh with your friends (like you really need to be told to do this) promotes group bonding and strengthens relations.



NEED IDEAS?

There is unfortunately no science to being funny. Remember when Sheldon from *The Big Bang Theory* tried to test what was funny by using whoopee cushions and a can of fake snakes? Don't be that person! What's funny to one person may be absurd and extremely offensive to another, so just use whatever humour comes naturally to you and accentuate it so you can be the funniest version of yourself.

• IMMERSE YOURSELF IN FUNNY THINGS

– Watching *Friends* or *Parks and Recreation* will a.) give you a good case of the giggles, and b.) let you see that everyone has a unique way of being funny. Your own humour is what those around you love, so indulge it.

• MIX REAL LIFE WITH ABSURDITY

– as Oscar Wilde said, "Life is too important to be taken seriously." It's harder to get caught up in the quest to become an ideal when you have a sense of humour about just how important it really is (or isn't).

• CELEBRATE IDIOSYNCRASIES.

You're human, so I'm assuming ('hoping') you would. These quirks or insecurities can be terrific for humour. Almost every comedian will pick on themselves at some time – self-deprecating humour is one of the funniest kinds. Think: Rebel Wilson. Talented actress and comedian, constantly making jokes about her weight and even had a role as the character 'Fat Amy'. She's not afraid to make light of her frame and does it with the x-factor – bags of self-confidence and kickass cheek. ■

EXTRA

AS FOR THE 'COOL KIDS' IN HIGH SCHOOL WHO SMOKED CIGARETTES BEHIND THE GYM...A STUDY IN JOURNAL CHILD DEVELOPMENT FOUND THAT ADOLESCENTS WHO WERE CONSIDERED COOL IN HIGH SCHOOL (WERE ROMANTICALLY INVOLVED AT A YOUNG AGE, CLUSTERED TOGETHER WITH ATTRACTIVE PEERS AND WERE GENERALLY HOOLIGANS) HAVE PROBLEMS ADJUSTING TO SOCIAL RELATIONSHIPS LATER IN LIFE, ENGAGE IN MORE CRIMINAL ACTIVITIES AND HAVE DIFFICULTIES WITH RESPONSIBLE ALCOHOL AND DRUG USE. THE STUDY CONFIRMED THAT THE FORMER COOL KIDS FELT THE NEED TO ENGAGE IN INCREASINGLY EXTREME BEHAVIOURS IN ORDER TO KEEP THEIR REPUTATION AS 'COOL' TO THEIR PEERS. SUDDENLY, NOT BEING INCLUDED IN THE COOL GROUP DOESN'T FEEL LIKE SUCH A DRAG AFTER ALL...

YOUR BEST » LOVE IT

ASSISTED SMARTS



PHOTOGRAPHY: THINKSTOCK



After so-called smart drugs gained a cult following among college students and ladder climbers, self-improvers have cottoned on to natural substances that promise to hone focus, fight fatigue and boost creativity. But can you really buy a brain upgrade over the counter?

Words: David Goding

Enhanced mental performance usually comes at a price. The edgy side effects of caffeine, the addictive nature of prescription drugs or the dangers of illegal drugs. But nootropics (pronounced 'new-tropics') offer new hope. They claim to be non-toxic, legal and devoid of significant side effects, and their growing legion of fans believe they make them smarter, improve memory and enhance cognitive performance.

Despite its relative anonymity, the term 'nootropic' was coined in the 1970s by Romanian psychologist and chemist Corneliu Giurgea. Derived from the Greek for 'mind-bend', it never really caught on. Nootropics' appeal lies in the promise of upgrading everything from motivation to concentration and mental endurance.

Historically, the word was most notoriously applied to amphetamine-based pharmaceuticals that are now either highly illegal or available on prescription only. Yes, they worked to make you more alert but didn't really do your anxiety levels or cardiovascular health many favours. You still occasionally see ADHD prescription drugs such as Ritalin referred to as nootropics, but most have moved on to safer territory.

Whereas amphetamine-based drugs are a potent stimulant of the central nervous system, new-school nootropics aim for more subtle chemical changes that affect neurotransmitter systems. In some cases, however, it's unclear exactly how they work, or whether they work at all.

Bafflingly, given the seismic demand for and discussion of noos by users, they're not officially recognised as a therapeutic category. Australia's drug regulator, the Therapeutic Goods Association (TGA), doesn't recognise it and you won't find it in psychiatry's bible, the *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders*.

Yet the parallel reality otherwise known as the social media world, which augments the one governed by authorities and regulatory standards, has enabled the term to gain traction. Books published on the topic by diehard nootropic devotees have cemented the term in contemporary lexicon.

"Nootropics are a rapidly developing area of nutrition research, and new studies and substances are coming out all the time," says nootropic advocate Brian Hadora, author of *Brain Supplements*.

WITHOUT ENOUGH ENERGY,
YOUR BRAIN CAN'T PRODUCE ENOUGH ANTIOXIDANTS
TO PROTECT IT FROM FREE RADICAL DAMAGE,
AND YOUR MENTAL PERFORMANCE WILL INEVITABLY SUFFER.

"Nootropics work by altering the brain's balance of chemicals in a way that leads to improved mental performance. Many users report they are able to focus better, remember more information and keep their brains running at high levels for extended periods of time," Hadora says.

Prescription smarts

There is such a thing as a 'smart drug' – insofar as substances that do or can enhance one or more areas of cognition. The It 'smart drug' of the moment, Modafinil, is licenced by the US Food and Drug Administration (FDA) for treating narcolepsy and other sleep disorders. Its promise has caused more hype than an iPhone launch among stressed executives, exhausted working mums and university students. Yet their application as smart drugs is what's known as 'off label', which means those without a relevant disorder will have trouble getting a doctor to prescribe them (and also means no access to any pharmaceutical benefits scheme subsidies).

Studies indicate that even the most potent pharmaceuticals are futile in people without the conditions

they were designed to treat. In a review of 24 studies spanning 1990 and 2015, Oxford researchers found that Modafinil appeared to be able to improve cognitive functions such as problem solving and planning – even in healthy people who were not sleep deprived. Yet on scores for improving certain cognitive functions such as memory and attention, many studies showed negligible benefits, leaving researchers to propose further investigation. It's a far cry from the conviction of pill chasers. Yet internet forums reveal a voracious underground community of people discussing how to get their hands on Modafinil without visiting a doctor. Anonymous forum discussions suggest a robust black market in buying and selling Modafinil prescribed to bona fide recipients.

Sanctioned smart drugs such as Modafinil aren't technically 'nootropics' – not least because the word isn't part of prescribers' lexicon. Conversely, nootropics, according to Hadora, aren't smart drugs.

"What makes nootropics different from other cognitive enhancers – like caffeine and nicotine – is that they have

few side effects and are non-addictive," says Hadora. "The criterion that anything termed a nootropic should not have significant side effects removes many stimulants and sedatives (LSD, many amphetamines) from this category.

Adderall (dextroamphetamine), for instance, is often prescribed for ADHD and gulped down in large quantities by students at exam time, but its side effects keep it from being categorised as a nootropic."

To qualify as a nootropic, by Hadora's definition, it must also be non-toxic, and produce a measurable improvement in brain function.

"True nootropics won't become less effective the more you use them," says Hadora. "Caffeine does indeed enhance cognitive function, for instance, but only over short periods of time. It also acts as a stimulant, and becomes less effective when used repeatedly over a prolonged period of time."

Other substances shown to effect changes that promote cognitive enhancement are also left off the list. While very good for the brain, tea, ginseng, Ginkgo biloba and fish oil capsules are not nootropics

according to Hadora.

"In short, all nootropics fall into the category of brain supplements, but not all brain supplements should be labelled nootropics," says Hadora.

Proof in the pill

Whether or not they're recognised by medicine is irrelevant to many nootropic enthusiasts, who deem themselves empirical evidence for efficacy. Likening it to many forms of complementary medicine and natural medicines is not an unfair comparison. And even if reported perks owe to placebo effect, it's still having the desired effect. Hadora distinguishes them as primary or secondary noos and categorises them by names reflecting their functional characteristics.

"Racetams heighten a neurotransmitter's ability to relay messages and raise the levels of glutamate and acetylcholine in the brain," he says. "Racetams also improve communication between the two hemispheres of the brain and can even protect brain cells that would otherwise be harmed by alcohol use."

In the racetam category is what's sometimes referred

to as the first nootropic – Piracetam. First synthesised in 1964, Piracetam has been used as a study aid and cognitive enhancer, with proponents attesting to its abetment of general cognition in people who have experienced mental decline.

"Piracetam enhances cellular membrane fluidity and helps reduce blood clotting as effectively as aspirin," says Hadora. "It has been used to help the brain recover from alcohol abuse and improve cognition in patients that have had a stroke."

Disappointingly, formal tests on the effectiveness of Piracetam – as with all racetams – have been inconclusive.

Then there's Aniracetam, which is actually part of the ampakine subset of the racetam class, praised for enhancing attention span, alertness and learning. It's often known as the relaxing racetam as it can have a mild sedative effect and has a shorter effect than Piracetam.

An upgrade to Piracetam, Pramiracetam is more potent but largely similar in effect. Oxiracetam is reported as having the greatest stimulant effect but notoriously causes a post-rush crash. Finally, there's Noopept, which is yet to be comprehensively assessed but appears in early testing to help with memory recall. It may even be helpful in the treatment of Alzheimer's disease.

Amino nootropics

Dismissed by some nootropic 'purists', secondary nootropics – which are just as unrecognised by official bodies as primary ones – have their fans. They can be synthetic or natural or a combination.

Arguably the eminent nootropic neutraceutical (yet another marketing-driven word unrecognised by authorities) is amino acid acetyl-L-carnitine – a slightly different form of the popular workout

supplement L-carnitine.

"If you're stressed out or lacking in mental energy, this supplement is just what the doctor ordered," says Dr David Perlmutter, neurologist and author of *The Better Brain Book*. "Carnitine is an amino acid, a building block of protein that is naturally produced by the body and found in food. Acetyl-L-carnitine is a chemically active form of this amino acid that is sold as a supplement."

Carnitine is important for optimal brain function for several reasons. First, carnitine is readily converted in acetylcholine, a neurotransmitter that is critical for learning and concentration. Second, it is a neuronal energiser.

"Without enough energy, your brain can't produce enough antioxidants to protect it from free radical damage, and your mental performance will inevitably suffer. As more and more brain cells are destroyed by free radicals, you will have more difficulty concentrating, your response time will slow down, and you will find yourself wasting precious time hunting down your glasses and your car keys."

Bacopa monnieri, a popular, natural extract from a tropical plant grown in water, has long been used in India for mental stimulation, with users reporting greater memory gains and enhanced cognition, with zero side effects.

L-theanine, which is found naturally in green tea, can be a potent smart drug when isolated in concentrated form.

"L-theanine has been shown

to improve reaction time and memory, especially when used in combination with caffeine," says Hadora. "It can cross the blood-brain barrier and promotes alpha wave production and the production of dopamine, a mood enhancer. It might also be capable of raising glutamate levels."

Creatine also makes a surprise appearance. Although long been used by bodybuilders, it's not so well known as a brain enhancer.

"In a recent experiment, vegetarians and the elderly showed improved memorisation and cognitive ability, though this mental effect is less pronounced among younger patients," says Hadora.

One of the most popular of the 'secondary' nootropic synthetics is armodafinil, also called Nuvigil.

"Called an analeptic and prescribed for people who are sleep deprived as a result of working odd hours, armodafinil has been shown to improve daytime wakefulness," says Hadora. "Doctors prescribe it for people with narcolepsy and sleep apnoea, both of which hinder healthy sleeping patterns."

Modafinil is similar in many ways to armodafinil in its intended use (sleep apnoea and narcolepsy) as well as effect.

"Modafinil is a popular drug for wakefulness, focus and clarity of thought, though some users have experienced headaches after continued use," says Hadora.

Interestingly, Modafinil is the only drug approved by the US Air Force as a 'go pill' for fatigue management.

Substance stacking

Nootropic 'stacking' involves, as the term implies, stacking more than one nootropic together to make new 'miracle' mind combos.

Mixing your own raw ingredients to create new stacks is not for the faint hearted (literally) and not recommended by the medical establishment at all. Fortunately, there are a myriad of companies out there selling pre-stacked nootropic combos that have, you hope, performed plenty of trial-and-error tests to develop their new smart drugs.

They go by enticing names such as New Mood, Alpha Brain, BrainBoost, Brain Stack, truBRAIN, Excelerol and Epic Focus.

"The most popular stacks involve mixing choline with one of the primary nootropics," says Hadora. "This is because taking certain nootropics can up your brain's requirement for choline, as the brain ramps production and output. It's as if nootropics run your brain at a higher horsepower, requiring



more gasoline that choline supplements provide.

"A water-soluble nutrient, choline helps to keep cell membranes healthy and serves as the precursor for the neurotransmitter acetylcholine, which governs memory and muscle control. Even without use in concert with nootropics, choline can increase a person's cognitive ability."

One study published in the *American Journal of Clinical Nutrition* found that higher choline intake resulted in better verbal and visual memory, as well as improved verbal learning, over a period of four years. Other studies admittedly haven't been as conclusive, or so enthusiastically received, with many experts arguing that supplementary choline is only effective when individuals are deficient in the nutrient.

Other stack ingredients may include serotonin, Gingko biloba, B6, B12, amino acids, antioxidants, and, of course, caffeine.

Buyer's market

The most common way of purchasing single nootropics or nootropic stacks is, you guessed it, online. You can hunt around, buy cheap and buy bulk once you've found something you like. Some preparations are also available through big-city health food stores and pharmacies.

Yet it's crucial to consult a GP or mental healthcare practitioner before you self-prescribe any sort of smart drug – no matter how natural. They can still interfere with other medications such as anti-depressant SSRIs.

Just add exercise

Hardcore nootropic devotees seek to boost their stacks' efficacy by combining it with exercise, and for good reason.

"Aerobic exercise boosts a key region of your brain – the frontal lobes," explains Professor Ian Robertson, neuroscientist and author of *Stay Sharp with*



**IN SHORT, ALL NOOTROPICS FALL INTO THE
CATEGORY OF BRAIN SUPPLEMENTS,
BUT NOT ALL BRAIN SUPPLEMENTS**

SHOULD BE LABELLED NOOTROPICS

the Mind Doctor. "This region is essential for mental sharpness because it is involved in our ability to organise ourselves, make decisions, show initiative, have a sense of humour and pay attention. The frontal lobes make us who we are."

The trouble is the frontal lobes cop the brunt of ageing, more than any other part of the brain, leading us to become forgetful, prone to repeating ourselves and forgetful. Aerobic exercise can prevent a lot of this decline in our brain power. But that's not all.

"Exercise generates a chemical called BDNF (brain-derived neurotrophic factor)," says Dr Robertson. "BDNF acts like a fertiliser for new brain connections and new brain cells. Physical fitness also increases the amount of serotonin in the brain, which is not only a key brain chemical for enhancing positive mood, but also helps brain cells to proliferate.

"Exercise also causes new capillaries to sprout in the brain, increasing nourishment – and hence survival – of brain cells and their connections that

might otherwise wither under the pressure of ageing."

Of course a lot of this nootropic obsession with alertness and cognitive stimulation is driven by fatigue due to a lack of sleep, which nootropics can exacerbate, particularly for those sensitive to stimulants. But sleep, rather than being viewed as the natural enemy, should be regarded as the ultimate nootropic. And with regular exercise you're more likely to get plenty of it.

"When you don't sleep well, your memory, learning, coordination, even your creativity degrades," says Sondra Kornblatt, author of *A Better Brain at Any Age*. "Sleep-restricted individuals have impaired memory and cognitive function, a shorter attention span, and a longer reaction time – possibly mimicking the symptoms of attention deficit disorder."

Fast forward

Don't expect smart drugs, or the quest to uncover better ones, to dissolve any time soon. The revenue potential

and scope to treat neurological disorders means pharmaceutical companies and medical researchers are doggedly pursuing the next big thing.

"As medical research expands into the use of nootropics' effects on healthy brains and additional studies are done on how to slow dreaded diseases such as Alzheimer's and Parkinson's, the future shines very brightly for rapid advances in this area of pharmacology," says Hadora.

"In addition, research done on depression has also proven promising for possible development of future synthetic nootropics that can help everyone think and process information better, not just be relieved of depression."

The two standout nootropics in development stage go by the catchy names of GLYX-13 and NSI-189.

"The research on treating depression has shifted from a focus on brain chemicals to growing and protecting brain cells as a block to depression; a change from brain chemistry mixing to brain physiology alteration," says Hadora. ■



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metime



While you're tracking your beats per minute and the calories in that jumbo muffin, you might want to keep an eye on the clock. With body parts ageing at different rates, paying the faster ones extra attention can prevent or slow their progress.

Words: Stephanie Osfield

Darryl Kerrigan famously said, "You can't stop progress." Nowhere is that truer than the temporal trajectory of the human body. While wealthier Westerners are smugly proclaiming triumph over nature with interventions such as muscle relaxants and dermal fillers, the hard fact is that no amount of masking the march of time will fool your ticker and muscles.

Yet science is providing hope for those who want to live forever; the discovery that body parts age at different rates may give people more control over the age of various organs. Keeping organs and hormone levels healthy is integral to preventing diseases such as cancer, where tissue rapidly undergoes changes, fast-forwarding its age by 36 years.

Whether you're 22 or 52, these lifestyle interventions are worth your time.



FRINGE BENEFIT: PERKY BOOBS

BREAST TISSUE

Breast tissue ages three to four years faster than other organs such as the heart according to University of California research. The other often-premature toll of breast tissue ageing is loss of fat and tissue mass due to declining oestrogen, which worsens as levels bottom out at menopause.

STOP THE CLOCK

EAT:

- » **Lay off the sauv blanc.** Just two drinks a day increases breast cancer by 51 per cent according to Harvard research tracking 100,000 women over 28 years.

MOVE:

- » **Hit the pavement.**

Walking for just an hour a day – or a total of five hours a week – can reduce breast cancer risk, University of South California researchers found.

DO:

- » **Watch your weight.**

Fat cells produce more oestrogen, which can stimulate the growth of some types of breast cancer.

- » **Adjust bedtime.** Getting fewer than six hours' sleep a night was implicated in increased risk of breast cancer in a Japanese study.

- » **Get off the gaspers.** If you smoke, there are a million reasons to quit – not least that nicotine use is linked to breast cell changes that promote the growth of cancerous tumours, Harvard research shows.

CELLS

The term 'nanna nap' didn't come from nowhere. As we age, degradation of cells can lead to less energy production by cells' engines, mitochondria. The effect is less stamina and generally feeling less peppy. The key culprit in cell damage is toxins called free radicals.

STOP THE CLOCK

EAT:

- » **Ditch the lollies and white bread:** Consumption of sugar and high-GI carbohydrates, which quickly turn to sugar, kick-start the glycation process, which is the body's version of rusting. It undermines the body's defences against free radicals.
- » **Shun trans fats:** Growing evidence suggests that trans fats, which have been hydrogenated to turn liquid oils into solid oils, make cell walls more rigid, preventing important nutrients and hormones from entering cells. Limit deep-fried and baked foods including store-bought



FRINGE BENEFIT: GREATER FITNESS

HEART

With age, arteries stiffen and fatty deposits accrue on artery walls, causing plaques that may rupture. The less heart-friendly your lifestyle, the bigger those plaques will be. "Both of these changes mean your heart is less capable of tolerating increased workloads caused by stress, illness and extreme physical exertion and increase your risk of experiencing a heart event such as a heart attack," says Dr Robert Grenfell, former national director of cardiovascular health at the Heart Foundation.

STOP THE CLOCK

- » **Feast Med-style:** With its low-glycaemic index (GI), the much-lauded Mediterranean diet helps to balance blood sugar by releasing glucose steadily and averting the heady peaks in insulin caused by high-GI foods. The menu also contains foods rich in heart-friendly nutrients – think omega-3s, antioxidants and polyunsaturated fats.

MOVE:

- » **Strike a pose:** Yoga's impact on cardiovascular risk markers may be comparable to other exercise such as walking according



FRINGE BENEFIT: ENERGY

biscuits, pastries, pies and cakes and avoid the terms 'hydrogenated oils' or 'partially hydrogenated vegetable oils'.

MOVE:

- » **Get intense:** All exercise benefits cellular mitochondria because it couriers oxygen to cells all over your body via blood. But high intensity interval training (HIIT), which involves short bursts of intense exercise followed by brief rests, can also stimulate the development of new mitochondria. Just 20 minutes of HIIT can be enough to kick-start changes, research shows.

DO:

- » **Be still:** Meditate for 10 to 30 minutes every day. Meditation can nourish cells' mitochondria and protect them from damage by free radicals, shows research at the Institute for Mind Body Medicine at Massachusetts General Hospital.

to a 2014 study published in the *European Journal of Preventive Cardiology*. Lengthening yoga postures such as downward dog and cat-cow could serve as stimuli for vascular adaptation and may help to keep arteries and the heart supple.

DO:

- » **Manage your moods:** "Depression and stress can increase strain on the heart and result in an increased risk of heart attack," says Grenfell. Bottom line? If you're not happy with your job, relationship or self-image, work on changing it.
- » **Nurture your chompers:** People with inflamed, sore or bleeding gums are almost twice as likely to suffer from coronary artery disease. See your dentist for regular checks and brush and floss your teeth every day.
- » **Scale the salt:** Keeping salt intake to less than six grams a day can cut the risk of heart attack by 25 per cent and stroke by 33 per cent. Use fresh herbs and powdered spices for flavour and choose lower sodium foods.
- » **Treat snoring:** Snoring exacerbates high blood pressure, which in turn increases heart attack risk.



FRINGE BENEFIT: FLAT TUMMY

BOWEL

Bloating, burping and stomach pain are among the unsavoury hallmarks of an ageing gut. Bacterial profile also shifts and according to cutting-edge research, a skew towards bad bugs in favour of good ones can cause symptoms including weight gain and depression or anxiety. Cancer is also a risk for women over 40. Small mushroom-shaped clumps of cells called polyps can form in the bowel and they may develop into cancer over time. Women with polyps should have periodic colonoscopies.

STOP THE CLOCK

EAT:

- » **Eat more resistant starch:** This type of fibre, found in cold pasta and potatoes, produces a compound called 'butyrate', which helps to maintain bowel lining health. A low-fibre diet can promote unhealthy gut bacteria, shows Harvard research.
- » **Skip the snag:** Barbecue may be the social season's cooking method du jour, but the high cooking temperature produces carcinogenic chemicals called AGEs (advanced glycation end products), which can increase bowel cancer risk according to the Cancer Council of Australia. To lower AGE levels of barbecued meat, marinade meat to increase its moisture content.
- » **Swap your salami:** It's the easiest platter filler there is, but salami is among processed meats linked to a colon cancer risk increase of almost double at a certain threshold. Keep total consumption of ham, devon, bacon and salami below 55 grams per day, advises the American Cancer Society.

MOVE:

- » **Up the Intensity:** People who engage in regular vigorous physical activity such as cycling, aerobics, tennis and jogging have lower bowel cancer risk than sedentary peers according to research from the University of Western Australia.

DO:

- » **Drink less:** Even just one glass of alcohol a day raises risk of bowel cancer by 10 per cent, shows the EPIC study, involving half a million people. Two glasses increases risk to 25 per cent and it continues to rise the more you drink.
- » **Consider probiotics:** These contain high levels of live bacteria, which can help your gut re-colonise good bacteria to blitz unhealthy bugs in your belly. Probiotics may improve digestion and absorption of nutrients, reduce inflammation that leads to irritable bowel and reduce hypersensitivity that leads to bloating.



FRINGE BENEFIT: MUSCLE TONE

BONES

Bone density peaks between the ages of 20 and 25 before skeletal structure starts to resemble honeycomb. Certain assaults such as stress, hormonal changes and poor diet can expedite erosion. On the flipside, targeted nutrition and bone-friendly exercise can help to maintain bone density and prevent further hollowing.

STOP THE CLOCK

EAT:

- » **Embrace dairy:** Eat three serves of dairy products daily and serve more fish and high-calcium foods such as legumes and green leafy vegetables.

- » **Abandon the fads:** Dropping to a super-low-kilojoule diet can cause your periods to stop, which can lead you to rapidly lose bone mass.

- » **Curb cola:** Women who down cola drinks (even decaffeinated ones) four or more times a week are at higher risk of developing osteoporosis later in life according to research from Tufts University. Drink tea instead – research shows that the antioxidants they contain help to strengthen bones.

MOVE:

- » **Lift:** Weight-bearing activities such as walking, running and strength training are critical for bone mass maintenance.
- » **Bounce:** This year's trampolining trend is the perfect way to implement the high-impact exercise recommended by senior medical sciences lecturer and bone health and exercise expert Dr Peter Rich. "Bone cells respond best to the 'loading' that comes with moderate to high impact exercise, such as activities that feature jumping and landing," says Dr Rich. Skipping is also bone friendly.

DO:

- » **Take a sun bath:** Enjoy 10 minutes of sun exposure every day to increase your levels of vitamin D, which is critical to your absorption of bone-building minerals phosphate and calcium.
- » **Watch your vices:** Avoid smoking, excess alcohol intake and keep salt and caffeine to a minimum – all of these factors can leach calcium from your bones. ■

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YOUR BEST >> LOVE IT

CONNECTION *cost*

WORDS: EVELYN LEWIN

PHOTOGRAPHY: THINKSTOCK

i

If your life has become a 24-hour cycle of snapping, tagging and checking who's liked your stuff, you're not alone. Smartphones have become annexes of our beings, inseparable from who we imagine ourselves to be (or at least hope to convince others we are). Almost 90 per cent of Australians aged 18 to 75 own a smartphone according to the 2014 Australian Mobile Phone Lifestyle Index (AMPLI) – and 57 per cent say they use it to access social media sites at least once a day. Indeed, if who and how many followers you have on Instagram or Pinterest arbitrates your beliefs about proximity

to your ideal self, losing or being without your phone would be akin to existential crisis. Given the reward value of validation by like, comment or follow, it's little wonder experts now recognise smartphone dependency as a bona fide problem despite it yet having to earn a place in psychiatry's *DSM 5*.

But the need to be connected at all times can also cause crises of the health kind (if you want to maintain your social self-image, you can't afford not to respond when an A-list blogger likes your yoga shot.) Sleep is among the first casualties of smartphone overuse.

You know the price of your monthly bill and how much you spend on extra data during the social season, but have you ever stopped to count the health costs of using your smart phone? From self-esteem to balance, the flip side of staying connected is adding up.

TEXTING, 'GRAMMING OR GOOGLING BEHIND THE WHEEL



You're on your way to Westfield and, in a flash of genius, you figure you'll get some inspiration by jumping on Pinterest. By the time you finally type 'jumpsuit' correctly, you're centimetres from the car in front after slamming on the brakes. Even in slow-moving traffic, the attention demanded by typing even simple words makes it impossible to give your full focus to the road. While we've been warned against texting while driving, Googling, Instagramming and Pinning are no different.

One piece of academic research found that texting slows

reaction time more than being over the blood alcohol limit. Research also shows that people are still typing behind the wheel despite awareness campaigns relaying the dangers. In a US study, four out of five college student drivers admitted to texting.

THE FIX

Keep your phone out of reach while driving by putting it in your handbag and placing that on the back seat. If you need to send a text or check an address on Google Maps, pull over before using your phone.



TEXTING AND WALKING

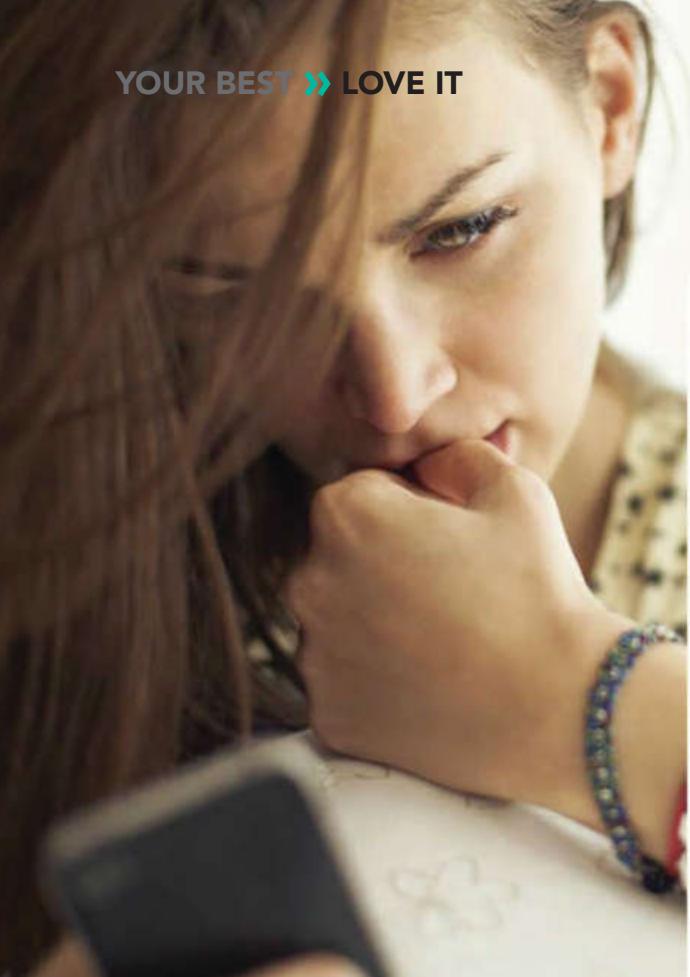
Sending an SMS or reading a text while walking can interfere with the body's self-balancing system. According to research published in *PLOS ONE* in 2014, texting while walking changes the way the body moves, with knock-on effects for balance.

Pedestrians who text also face higher risks of injury than those who keep their hands – and ears – free. Reports of car-pedestrian accidents related to mobile phone use have increased in recent years, with most due to pedestrians failing to hear warning cues such as a car beeping or tram bell. Having headphones in also creates an illusion of solitude whereby awareness of one's surroundings

is reduced. Stepping into traffic is among reported causes of accidents resulting in serious injury or death. Less serious injury can also result from tripping over obstacles from litter to bike racks and dogs. A YouTube video of an American woman who fell into a fountain at a shopping centre while texting went viral last year, but it's unremarkable when you consider the level of focus required to punch out a memo.

THE FIX

If your text can't wait until you've stopped moving – a question worth asking before you give in to impulse – find a spot to stand or sit while you type.



TEXTING/UPDATING YOUR STATUS WHILE EATING

Do you keep your phone on the table when you're lunching with friends – and think it's okay to answer texts or Insta comments despite having company? Two words: not okay (unless you're asking for their help deciphering a message from the guy you met at the pub/pathological manager/another friend).

"I have definitely seen people overusing their phone to the point that they forget there is someone sitting in front of them," says Sydney-based positive psychologist and coach Sarah-Jayne McCormick. She says the reason we love our phones so much is they give us instant feedback, which we find very gratifying. However, doing so undermines and jeopardises spending quality time with real people – who deserve your full attention and to know they're important.

THE FIX

The good news, says McCormick, is that a few firm-but-simple rules administered to self can rehabilitate your inner phone narcissist. She suggests choosing a 'cut-off' time, so that after say 6pm (or whenever suits you), you stop checking your phone again until morning. And when you're out with friends, family or your partner, switch your phone off and focus on the person you're with.

HASHTAG ALL-NIGHTERS



Simply checking emails before bed can wreak havoc on your body's internal clock, so imagine what responding to a like or comment in the wee hours does for your shut-eye.

It's not just the fact that using your phone gears up your brain when it should be winding down. The type of light emitted by mobile phones interferes with the release of melatonin, a hormone that regulates the sleep-wake cycle. Once you've been exposed to that light, it's far harder to simply close your eyes and get to sleep.

"Some of the screens like tablets, computers, TVs and phones emit blue light," says general practitioner Dr Ronald McCoy. "Blue light is the one that stimulates things like the pineal gland and that affects melatonin secretion and what it does is it actually keeps you awake."

THE FIX

According to a Mayo Clinic study, dimming the brightness on your mobile phone and holding it at least 35 cm from your face while using it makes your phone far less likely to disrupt melatonin levels.

Many experts suggest going one step further and banning the phone from the bedroom. "A lot of sleep experts say no screen time for at least half an hour before you go to bed. Don't put a TV in the bedroom so you're not tempted to switch it on. It's a good time to read a magazine or a newspaper or a physical thing that doesn't emit that sort of light," Dr McCoy says. According to psychologist Joann Lukins, sleep deprivation – quantity or quality – can undermine mental performance, resilience and mood and cause chaos in self-regulating systems such as appetite.

GABBING ON YOUR HANDSFREE HEADSET



Yes, everyone knows you're using car time to finalise the deal with Boston, not – gasp – talking or singing to yourself. But mainstream adoption of handsfree headphones makes the question of smartphones and cancer particularly prudent, since the earphones are even closer to your brain than the phone would be held against your ear.

The science on effects of radiation swings back and forth and has yet to conclude that mobile phones are dangerous. But it is also struggling to keep pace with technology, so the empirical data may not arrive until the first generation on headset-toting chatterboxes reaches old age. A longitudinal study called Interphone, which was published in 2010 after 12 years

of data collection, failed to find a link between brain cancer and normal use of mobile phones. But when you consider the difference in usage and time spent using phones now to 1998, it's not foolproof.

For instance, handsfree headphones have only been widely adopted in the past few years and there is little research indicating whether they're cause for concern. What experts unanimously agree on is that the farther your phone is from your body, the better it is. Radiation drops by a factor of four when it is five cm from your person, so speakerphone is a safe bet.

Bluetooth headsets have also been shown to be better than wired ones. The radiation from a Bluetooth earpiece has been

ADDICTED.com



estimated as being 100 to 200 times lower than that from holding a phone to your ear. Yet even an idle Bluetooth headset continues to send a signal, so don't leave your headphones in while you're doing the shopping or cooking dinner.

If you can't live without wires, try a hollow tube set, which create a gap between your noggin and the radiation with a hollow piece of plastic. They're fine for the car, but as the sound has to travel the unwired distance, they pick up ambient noise – not good for private conversations or chatting in public places.

THE FIX

There's no harm in exercising caution when it comes to phone use. If you're the reason your telco introduced a fair use policy, consider mixing your media and using text or email where calling is unnecessary. Also keep your phone in your bag rather than in your pocket or on your body while you're not using it. If you're really concerned, give yourself some alone time (from your phone, that is) and keep it in the kitchen overnight. This will also solve the irresistible temptation to sit up and see who's pinged you at 2.29am.

There's nothing quite like whiling away four hours in a cyber meander from a yoga link to Stanford's philosophy department – via *style.com* and the 10 blogs *The Interiors Addict* recommends. But when the odd link trek turns into a regular occurrence, it can become a problem. While it doesn't yet have its own listing in medical textbooks, dependency on digital space has been considered in the latest version of mental health bible the *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders V* (DSM V). Internet gaming disorder has its own heading. "It's a fairly new phenomenon and things take a while to get into the DSM," says Lukins. Like any other addiction, being hooked on the Internet is a sign that something is amiss; it's an extreme vice. "It's a less helpful behaviour that people are engaging in to meet a need...something that isn't working in their lives. So it's a dysfunctional coping strategy, a way of distracting themselves," Dr Lukins says.

Symptoms of addiction include spending increasing amounts of time online and finding it challenging to rein your usage. It becomes problematic when it dictates how you live your life and impacts real life (if you're skipping dinner with friends to hang out on Facebook or Snapchat, it's gone too far). Irritability when the Internet's down or panic when you're going on holiday to a spot with bad reception – or refusing to book a remote locale for the sake of your feeds – are also signs it's time to get help. "People need a plan in terms of balancing their time and getting an understanding of how the addiction has developed," says Lukins. "Usually it's taken place because people are trying to avoid something else. So it's really about dealing with the issue that made you need to cope with it in the first place."

“

Like any other addiction, being hooked on the internet is a sign that something is amiss;

IT'S AN EXTREME VICE.



IN A CLASSIC SHOWDOWN
BETWEEN SENSE AND
VANITY, WOMEN ARE
SUFFERING LONG-TERM
MUSCULOSKELETAL
PROBLEMS AS A RESULT
OF THEIR WARDROBE
CHOICES. WITH PARTY
SEASON UPON US, WE
SCRUTINISE THE WORST
OFFENDERS.

WARDROBE MALFUNCTION

SKYSCRAPER HEELS

Vertiginous heels are considered a nightmare by health experts such as podiatrists, physiotherapists and chiropractors, who regularly treat women suffering serious ailments caused by frequently wearing high heels.

"Generally, of all the footwear that can be worn, high heels are the most damaging," says Melbourne-based podiatrist and past president of the Australian Podiatry Association of Victoria Matt Dilnot (melbournefootclinic.com.au).

More serious long-term seques from heel purism include arthritis of the feet, ankles and knees, clawed toes from trying to keep shoes on, bunions and thickened nails due to feet being squeezed into tight heels. Lower back problems are also common.

"Some women can get away with wearing heels better than others if they have a good foot structure, but ultimately all feet suffer damage as a consequence of wearing these sorts of shoes regularly," says Dilnot.

Queen of heels Victoria Beckham was ordered by

doctors to wear flats after a slipped disc in her back – a symptom of her love of stilettos (to be fair, she has recently been seen sporting sneakers sanctioned by the normcore trend).

"The majority of patients seeing podiatrists are women, and a significant percentage of the problems they are suffering are due to footwear that is too tight, and in older patients they often present with damage that has been done over years of wearing higher heeled shoes," Dilnot says.

Walking in high heels puts about two tonnes of force on the ball of the foot and heel with every step instead of an even distribution across the foot according to Dilnot. "In addition, the compression force on the knee joints when wearing high heels increases by 23 per cent compared to bare feet."

Even wedge-heeled shoes

place considerable pressure and weight on feet.

While one study of 50- to 70-year-old women, at Warwick and Oxford Brookes universities, found that wearing heels could diminish women's odds of developing arthritic changes in knee joints due to having exercised leg muscles, the weight of evidence votes against it. Regular deep tissue massage of calves and Achilles tendons may slow the shortening of tendons.

"Victoria Beckham is likely to end up wearing football boots when she is older to cope with the problems she will develop (or already has)," Dilnot says.

Anything that affects leg mechanics will have a chain reaction into the hips and spine, say staff at Sydney Chiropractic Care (sydneychirocare.com.au).

Tilted pelvises are among the injuries directly related to wearing heels.

High heels are also an under-reported cause of accidents. Monash Accident Research Centre figures reveal that more than 240

patients were treated at Victorian hospital emergency departments for injuries from wearing high heels in the past five years. Most were the result of falls causing sprains, strains and breaks to the ankle or foot. Unsurprisingly, women aged 20 to 24 are most heel injury prone, followed by women aged 25 to 29.

For diehard totterers, certain exercises can serve as a sort of harm minimisation. Daily calf stretching before and after wearing heels will minimise the effects heels have on tendons.

But Dilnot recommends limiting the time spent wearing skyscraper shoes to two to three hours at a time – try wearing flats while you're in the office and on days when you don't have meetings – and wearing the worst offenders to events with a sit-down component. Weight-bearing movement causes most damage.

High heels are best kept below five centimetres, and leather shoes are best. "Wedges are preferable to stilettos and also platform type shoes which give height without the significant angulation at the ankle."

COMPRESSION FORCE
on the knee joints when
wearing high heels
increases by
23 PER CENT
compared to
bare feet.



SKINNY JEANS

The visual fallouts from overly tight white jeans are nothing compared with some side effects of too-small fashion items.

Skinny jeans – particularly those in non-breathable wet-look fabrics and faux leather – can cause and perpetuate vaginal problems such as rashes and itches according to gynaecologists.

And while suffering for the perfect cleavage is nothing new – women in Victorian times would often faint because their corsets were laced so tightly – ill-fitting bras can also wreak havoc. A bra that squeezes can restrict breathing, cause back pain and even cause digestive issues and exacerbate irritable bowel syndrome from pressure on the diaphragm.

BUCKET BAGS

Back pain is among the leading sources of healthcare expenditure, yet women – and, thanks to the man bag, men – are ignoring their body's main arterial for the sake of fashion.

A heavy handbag forces the body into an unnatural biomechanical position, in turn forcing muscles not designed for certain roles to support more than their share of force, which eventually leads to conditions. At worst, postural imbalances can lead to spinal disc and even nervous system problems. The incessant extra weight of a bag carried on one shoulder can also result in overcompensation by the other side, which is why women who carry their bag on the left shoulder often have a higher right one.

The first casualty of heavy handbags is imbalance. Hanging your bag on one shoulder consistently – most people tend to carry purses on their dominant side – causes the muscles in the dominant shoulder to grow while their non-dominant peers remain the same or atrophy. Posture is a direct side effect of such imbalances, which also force the spine to compensate and can lead to spasms from the spine's overcompensation for the load. The greater the weight load, the greater the trauma for muscles and bones.

The trapezius, near your shoulder blades, can tighten and spasm, as can smaller muscles recruited to compensate for imbalance.

The problem is compounded by movement in an incorrect biomechanical position. Even a small or lighter handbag can impede the body's natural gait, which includes the way the arms and legs swing and keeps the body balanced.

Long term, chronic misalignment can increase the risk of arthritis in the neck and back.

Even if you don't suffer a problem such as wry neck that requires physiotherapeutic intervention, a hulking handbag can lead to headaches.

If you insist on having a large handbag, try upgrading to this season's trending backpack style in leather or vegan leather. If you must carry a lateral bag, switch up sides to ameliorate the loading and avoid injury sustained through repetitive use.

FANCY FOOTWORK

Don't let discoloured toenails or blisters kill your party buzz. Podiatrist and Bared Shoes (Bared.com.au) founder Anna Baird gets your pedi party-ready.

ATHLETE'S FOOT/TINEA

WHAT IT IS: "The most common types are chronic papulosquamous tinea, which presents as dry, thick scales and fissures around the edge of the feet, and acute vesicular tinea pedis, which presents as itchy vesicles in between the toes and on non-weight-bearing areas of the foot like the arch," Baird explains. Both types of tinea are caused by dermatophytes – a tissue-destroying fungus. "These dermatophytes (pathogenic fungi) love moist, warm environments, so the feet are the perfect place for them to live," Baird says.

DIY: Do-it-yourself antifungal treatments are generally effective. Also change socks regularly to avoid recontamination once you've killed the fungus.

CLINIC SOLUTION: Severe and chronic cases call for expert intervention. "Your podiatrist can take a sample to check what type of fungus is causing the problem. This can help to target the pathogen with the most effective medication," Baird says.

DROP THE RISK: Avoid letting your skin come into contact with the floor or gym and pool showers and change rooms. Wear thongs around public pools. "Your pores are open and vulnerable to penetration when wet, and there are plenty of fungal spores waiting in the warm pools of water," Baird says. At home, wash feet thoroughly between the toes, wear cotton socks and generally allow feet to be exposed to air as much as possible.

FUNGAL NAILS

WHAT IT IS: Classic symptoms of fungal nail infection are discolouration, thickening, brittleness or crumbling and separation of the nail from the nail bed. There is usually a build-up of debris under the nail. Like tinea, fungal nail infections are due to dermatophytes, which flourish in warm and moist environments.

DIY: Baird is sceptical about the efficacy of DIY treatments. "A large toenail can take nine months to grow out, so even if your treatment is successful, it can take a long time for the nail to look normal again." The location of fungal nails makes self-treatment tricky. "It is tricky to get the topical solution to penetrate the nail bed and it can quickly build up on the nail, creating a further barrier to penetration."

CLINIC SOLUTION: Different professionals favour different approaches. Dermatologists may favour the latest treatment type, laser therapy, while podiatrists prepare feet for optimal topical treatment. "A podiatrist will use a tool that thins the nail to decrease any thickness that a fungal infection may have caused. This allows for more effective topical treatment," Baird says. "They may also take a scraping culture in order to be able to prescribe an oral medication."

DROP THE RISK: As well as taking precaution around warm, moist environments, Baird recommends regularly removing toenail polish. "Often moisture can get trapped under the nail polish, causing white marks on the nail," Baird says.

PAPILLOMA/WARTS

WHAT IT IS: Commonly found on hands, papillomas can occur on the feet. "Human papilloma viruses usually are spread by direct skin contact," Baird explains. "Plantar warts or warts on the soles of the feet are most spread from contact with a wart on the person's hand. Less often they can be spread from wearing a person's shoes that is infected with plantar warts. It can take months after contact for a wart to present itself."

DIY: Over-the-counter solutions aren't foolproof, Baird says. "Most home treatments involve regular application of strong chemicals that eat into the unhealthy wart tissue," she says. "It can take months and all of the viral tissue must be removed, which means eating into some healthy tissue as well."

CLINIC SOLUTION: A professional can evacuate a wart on the spot. "Podiatrists can use a range of strong chemicals similar to over-the-counter treatments but in higher concentrations. They will also often use liquid nitrogen to freeze the unhealthy tissue," Baird says.

DROP THE RISK: Avoid contact with wet public areas.

BLISTERS

WHAT IT IS: These small bubbles on the skin are "caused by pressure and friction," Baird says. Women prone to sweaty feet are also more likely to be afflicted. "Moisture in your feet leads to more friction, so unfortunately women with sweaty feet suffer with blisters more often."

DIY: Most blisters are innocuous. The key piece of advice is not to peel or pop them as they may become infected. Baird recommends placing a plaster or dressing over the blister and letting it heal naturally.

CLINIC SOLUTION: For large fluid-filled blisters, a medical professional can pierce the blister with a sterile instrument and then dress the area to prevent infection.

DROP THE RISK: Use Hypafix or Medifix tape inside shoes in areas prone to blistering. For closed-in shoes, smear Vaseline over the tape.

CORNS

WHAT IT IS: Unlike blisters, which are caused by friction, corns are thick and calloused sites caused by repeated pressure. "Corns can occur where there has been a focal point of pressure, usually over a bony prominence. The skin thickens as a protective mechanism," Baird explains. There are two types: hard and soft. Hard corns occur on the outer sides of feet while soft corns populate between the toes where skin is moist.

DIY: Baird is reluctant to recommend home corn treatments. "Home-based solutions involve using chemicals that eat into the skin and soften it in the hope that it will eventually fall off. The problem with these is that they penetrate into healthy skin, causing it to break or ulcer. These treatments can even result in infection if care is not taken in their application."

CLINIC SOLUTION: A podiatrist would use a scalpel to cut out the corn's deep central core. The healthy skin should not be affected, so there is usually no bleeding. This is the only truly effective and safe way to remove a corn," Baird says.

DROP THE RISK: Preventing corns from developing in the first place all comes down to one thing: shoe choice. "Avoid shoes that cause high pressure areas or are too tight over your bony toes," Baird says. ■

Hair, skin and nails a little dull?



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CHC 70943-08/15

SOCIAL ANXIETY DISORDER

CONDITION REPORT



Telltale signs

Sufferers try to avoid situations in which they anticipate being embarrassed or humiliated. Even eating in front of people in a restaurant can cause extreme anxiety, causing sufferers to avoid situations to avert distress. If avoidance isn't possible, facing the feared situation can be accompanied by distressing thoughts, panic, sweating, nausea, diarrhoea, trembling, blushing or stammering when trying to speak. "Most people who have been in an embarrassing situation don't expect that it will happen the same way every time. The difference between those people and people with social phobia is called the 'locus of control,'" says Melbourne counselling psychologist Julian McNally (actofliving.com.au). They perceive that events are not within their

If you've ever spent Saturday dreading mingling with the in-crowd – whether they're from the cricket club or the kids' kinder class – you could be suffering from a form of anxiety that renders social situations terrifying. Social anxiety disorder affects an estimated 10 per cent of Australians during their lifetime according to beyondblue. The condition, also known as social phobia, is more common in women.

control. Untreated, social phobia can rob sufferers of joy. "People with social phobia miss out on a lot because of the avoidance. All the things that are really important in life generally come to us through other people: doing well at work, establishing a relationship, starting a family," McNally says.

Cause and effect

Where social phobia diverges from shyness is in the fact that shy people are generally able to get through social situations without too much difficulty. Yet shyness is believed to be a cause of social phobia. "You're more likely to see social phobia in someone who was shy as a child," McNally says. There may also be a genetic link – anxiety disorders tend to run in families – and

learned behaviour plays a big part. "Some people actually need training in social skills like waiting for sentences to finish, switching topics and waiting for contact, simply because they didn't have the opportunity to learn them as a child," he says.

Life of the party in training

Treatment of social phobia doesn't seek to change a person's personality or what makes them them. Given the likelihood of shyness underlying social phobia, it's unlikely that treatment will turn someone with social anxiety into the 'life of the party'. Instead, treatment – usually a double-pronged approach combining 'talk therapy' and antidepressant or anti-anxiety medication – seeks to calm excessive fear responses and chemicals that promote them and overwrite beliefs that render social situations threatening.

"Some people have managed their social phobia quite well with beta blockers, which are normally used to treat heart conditions and high blood pressure," McNally says. "They relieve the physical symptoms of anxiety quite well, and fairly immediately."

Cognitive behavioural therapy, or CBT, is the best-known tool in the psychological kit for addressing the faulty beliefs and thoughts that perpetuate pathological behaviours. "The first thing is to recognise thoughts and feelings as passing incidents that don't warrant all the attention they get," McNally says. "If you get up and deliver a speech and it goes badly, that embarrassment is passing. It's unpleasant while it's happening, but you will get over it."

CBT often also involves graded exposure, where sufferers are encouraged to gradually put themselves in the situations they've been avoiding.

"We actually don't want to totally remove anxiety, because we need a certain degree of arousal to perform well. Rather, it's reframing 'anxiety' to looking at it as exhilaration or excitement."

#THERAPY

While social media is often blamed for fraying the fabric of interpersonal relationships and eroding social skills, it may paradoxically be useful for sufferers of social anxiety.

"A lot of people connect through social and electronic media these days, and for people who are housebound or constrained by their anxiety, those outlets may be very beneficial," McNally says.

"These people can express themselves that way, whereas they might not be able to in person."

But he cautions that relying too much on connection via the web can make it harder to conquer the phobia. But hanging out on Facebook without exposure to offline social situations could become yet another avoidance method, he warns. "Over time, the aim is to build the person's capacity to undertake the risks they've avoided," he says.

SHY OR PHOBIC?

USE THIS QUIZ ADAPTED FROM THE DIAGNOSTIC STATISTICAL MANUAL OF MENTAL DISORDERS AS A LOOSE GUIDE TO WHERE YOU FALL ON THE SOC-ANX SPECTRUM.

CHOOSE THE ANSWER THAT MORE ACCURATELY REFLECTS YOUR EXPERIENCE.

1. Do you become anxious when faced with a social situation?

Yes // No

2. Does your anxiety make you avoid speaking in public or at social events?

Yes // No

3. Do you avoid situations in which you may become the centre of attention?

Yes // No

4. Do you plan your career moves or study choices based on the amount of public speaking required?

Yes // No

5. Do you feel depressed or overwhelmed as a result of your anxiety about social situations?

Yes // No

6. On a scale of 1 to 10 (with 10 being high anxiety and 1 being little or no anxiety), do you consistently experience anxiety levels of 6 or above?

Yes // No

7. Do you use alcohol or drugs to cope with your social anxiety?

Yes // No

8. Are you sensitive to criticism?

Yes // No

9. Do you believe that your fear or social situations/public speaking is excessive?

Yes // No

10. Do you fear that you will act in a way that will result in humiliation or embarrassment?

Yes // No

11. Have you ever experienced a panic attack related to your social anxiety?

Yes // No

SCORE CARD

<2

You may benefit from self-help techniques to make social occasions less stressful (and a whole lot more enjoyable).

2+

You may wish to speak with a GP, psychologist or counsellor about whether you are suffering, or at risk of suffering, social anxiety disorder.

This quiz is not a substitute for medical evaluation.

Where to get help Shyness and Social Anxiety Treatment Australia // Includes a national database of psychologists specialising in social anxiety // socialanxietyassist.com.au

A woman with dark hair tied back, wearing a blue sports bra and black shorts, is leaning against a white wall and taking a selfie with a black smartphone. She is blowing a kiss towards the camera. In the background, there is a whiteboard with a blue plus sign and brackets drawn on it.

Foolproof *selfie beauty* TRICKS

Selfies are already taken when you're at your perceived peak level of physical attractiveness – getting ready for a date or party, or looking your most polished before the start of the day. There are, however, ways that you can optimise them even more. Just look to the pros – Gigi Hadid, Kendall Jenner, Kim Kardashian et al – and how they get their signature selfie-ready glow. We're talking skincare, hair and make-up. Before perfecting your pose, pout and preen, we've tips for creating a flawless face for the ultimate smize at the camera. Get snapping, then watch the 'likes' roll in. Here are our tips on how to look more photogenic in the flash.



SELFIE MUST: CAMERA-READY CANVAS

Want selfie-ready skin? Good skincare can help you achieve that lit-from-within-glow even before applying make-up. Bring your complexion to life and restore its lustre with an at-home face mask or peel containing alpha hydroxy acids (AHAs), glycolic acid or lactic fruit acids. These work to plump up skin and boost luminosity in minutes, and they're not as strong as the ones used in the clinic. Use once or twice a week to tighten pores, tone and wake up tired-looking skin.

WH&F Picks:

- » Ole Henriksen Lemon Strip Flash Peel, \$79, sephora.com.au
- » Ultraceuticals Ultra Clear Purifying Mask, \$59, ultraceuticals.com
- » Alpha-H Liquid Gold Smoothing and Perfecting Mask, \$65, alpha-h.com

SELFIE MUST: HYDRATION HAVEN

Sure, there's a bunch of photo-editing apps to perfect our complexion, but perfect skin shouldn't require a filter. When skin is dry, skin cells become opaque and don't reflect the light as well. Give yourself new selfie-ready radiance with a good moisturiser. Choose one that is rich in ceramides and lipid-rich oils, which will deeply moisturise and repair the skin's damaged layers. A strengthened lipid barrier will allow the skin to reflect light, imparting a glowing perfection in every photo.

SELFIE MUST: ACE OF BASE

Give your face a no-slip base with the right primer, which will make your foundation look freshly applied for longer, blurring out imperfections while mattifying the skin to prevent that shiny finish. For foundation, choose one with reflective particles, which respond well to camera flash settings. Try

mixing it with a pump of hydrating serum, patting it onto the skin to give it a natural glow. After foundation, use a tiny pointed concealer brush and full-coverage cream concealer to camouflage any dark circles, pimples or blemishes for that perfectly airbrushed effect.

WH&F Picks:



STEP 1: PRIME

- » Maybelline New York Baby Skin Instant Pore Eraser, \$15.95, maybelline.com.au
- » Napoleon Perdis Auto Pilot Radiance-Boosting Primer, \$55, napoleonperdis.com
- » INIKA Certified Organic Pure Primer, \$60, inika.com.au

STEP 2: PROTECT

- » Shu Uemura POREraser CC UV Under Base Mousse, \$48, shuuemura.com.au
- » IT Cosmetics Your Skin But Better CC+ Cream with SPF 50, \$38, itcosmetics.com
- » MAC Prep + Prime CC Colour Correcting SPF 30, \$48, maccosmetics.com.au

STEP 3: COVER

- » Rimmel London Wake Me Up Foundation, \$19.95, au.rimmellondon.com
- » glo.minerals Luxe Liquid Foundation, \$72, glostore.com.au
- » Giorgio Armani Sheer Fluid, \$90, 1300 651 991



WH&F Picks:

- » Bobbi Brown Extra Illuminating Moisture Balm, \$95, bobbibrown.com.au
- » SkinCeuticals Emollience Moisturizer, \$129, advancedcosmeceuticals.com.au
- » Elizabeth Arden Ceramide Gold Ultra Restorative Capsules, \$126, elizabetharden.com.au



SELFIE MUST: SHINE CONTROL

Hate that oily slick of sheen on your forehead, evident in every one of your Facebook photos? Even if you don't consider yourself to have oily skin, the camera somehow manages to pick up any shiny areas, especially around the T-zone. Throw blotting papers into your handbag and keep a loose, translucent powder handy to touch up prior to photo opportunities.

WH&F Picks:

- » **Swisspers Blot-Off Oil Tissues**, \$5.95, swisspers.com.au
- » **Arbonne Setting Pretty Translucent Loose Powder Broad Spectrum SPF 15**, \$46, arbonne.com
- » **Skindinavia The Makeup Finishing Spray Oil Control**, \$39, skindinavia.com.au



SELFIE MUST: BIGGER, BETTER HAIR

When it comes to hair, now's the time to pump up the volume! Hair that's flat may work in real life, but it requires a bit of tweaking for the best self-portrait shot. Start by switching to a volumising shampoo and conditioner, alternating to a clarifying option once a week to ensure hair doesn't get weighed down. For extra volume, use a volumising spray and flip your head over while drying. Once you're settled with your style, keep finger fussing to a minimum – oils from your hands can flatten hair.

SELFIE MUST: BROWS THAT WOW

The on-fleek brow trend was practically born from the selfie phenomenon. Whether you favour an all-natural, full look or something that's more of a statement, groomed brows have the ability to anchor your make-up and frame your face in minutes. After shaping, use a brush-on gel to groom the hairs before shading in with a smudge-proof brow powder. And whatever you do, avoid over-plucking!

WH&F Picks:

- » **Bobbi Brown Brow Kit**, \$75, bobbibrown.com.au
- » **L'Oréal Paris SuperLiner Brow Artist Shaper**, \$22.95, lorealparis.com.au
- » **Benefit Gimme Brow**, \$37, 02 9249 5300



WH&F Picks:

- » **L'Oréal Paris Elvive Fibralogy Thickening Shampoo & Conditioner**, \$5.95, lorealparis.com.au
- » **TONI&GUY Hair Care Casual Rough Texturiser Spray**, \$16, 1800 061 027
- » **nak Done.n.Dusted**, \$24.95, nakhair.com.au





SELFIE MUST: LET'S GET LIPPY

The camera loves intensely pigmented products. Get ready for your close-up with a bright and bold lipstick that will draw attention to your pout. Be sure to choose a matte finish, avoiding products with frost or sparkles as these don't photograph well.

WH&F Picks:

- » **Napoleon Perdis Mattetastic Lipstick**, \$38, napoleonperdis.com
- » **Elizabeth Arden Beautiful Color Moisturizing Matte Lipstick**, \$35, elizabetharden.com.au
- » **Shu Uemura RU Supreme Matte**, \$39, shuumura.com.au



Do as the models do:

Take your cues from the Instaglam set when perfecting your pose. Hold your phone high above your head and away from you at a 45-degree angle so that you look slim and trim in your selfie.

Know your best side:

A lot of people look best at a tilt, and not front on. Try experimenting in front of the mirror or photobooth to determine which tilts are most flattering for your face.

SELFIE MUST: CUSTOM CONTOURING

And now for make-up! There are techniques you can employ to draw attention to your best features while shadowing the ones you don't want to showcase. Contouring and highlighting work wonders, preventing your face from looking too 'flat' in the photo.

With the right bronzer and illuminator, you don't need to pull an intense blue steel to make it look as though you have razor-sharp cheekbones. Apply illuminator on your cheeks in a 'C' formation, from the outer corners of the eyes to the temples. Concentrate on bringing light to your nose bridge, brow bones and above your Cupid's bow while mattifying areas such as your jawline to slim down your face.

WH&F Picks:

BEST HIGHLIGHTERS

- » **MAC Prep + Prime Highlighter**, \$42, maccosmetics.com.au
- » **Red Earth Secret Potion Illuminating Skin Fluid**, \$39, redearth.com
- » **ARBONNE Cosmetics Sheer Glow Highlighter**, \$56, arbonne.com



BEST BRONZERS

- » **Clinique Chubby Stick Sculpting Contour**, \$42, clinique.com.au
- » **Ere Perez Pure Rice Powder Bronze Tones**, \$37.95, ereperez.com
- » **Benefit Sun Beam**, \$45, 02 9249 5300



BEST CONTOUR KITS

- » **Cover FX Contour Kit**, \$67, sephora.com.au
- » **Anastasia Beverly HillsContour Kit**, \$66, sephora.com.au
- » **Maybelline New York Face Studio Master Sculpt Contouring Palette**, \$19.95, maybelline.com.au

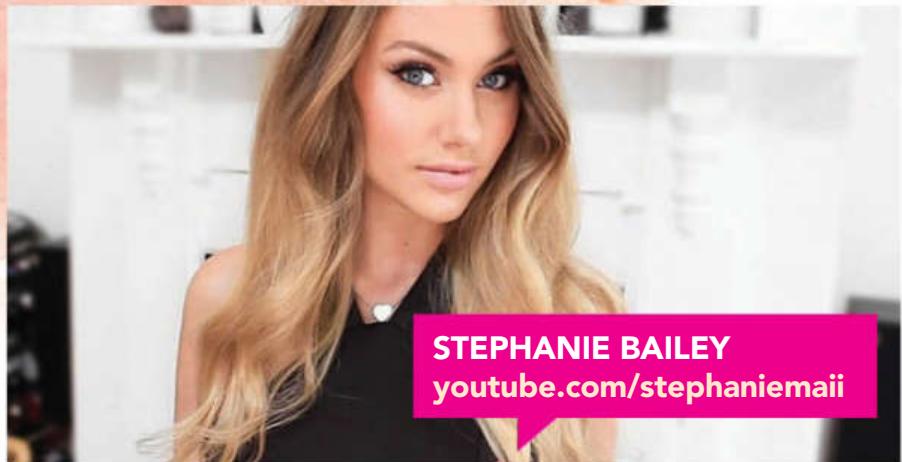


Let there be light:

You can tell when selfies have been taken in the darkened corners of a bedroom, bathroom or mirrored elevator! As a rule of thumb, natural light – particularly early morning or late afternoon – is the ideal time to take a selfie. You can, however, fake it with an in-home vanity make-up light. ■

THE BLOGGER'S GUIDE TO *Spring* Beauty

Spring's influx of new beauty products and colour ways is the perfect foundation for a make-up shake-up. To keep creativity within the bounds of respectability – no-one wants to be the person with #beautypity comments – we've enlisted the web's top beauty bloggers and vloggers to share their tips for making it work. From daily staples to special occasion big guns, they've got it nailed. All you need to do is play along at home (and save their blogs to favourites).



STEPHANIE BAILEY
youtube.com/stephaniemaii

What's your day job? I'm finishing off a Bachelor of Media while juggling my YouTube beauty channel and part-time job as a menswear stylist.

How do you change your make-up routine for spring? Springtime is all about light and dewy make-up application. I enjoy a minimal base (BB cream or tinted moisturiser) with cream-based products for cheeks and lips.

Any new product releases you're excited about? I got my hands on Burts Bees Nourishing Facial Water, due for release in November. It helps moisturiser really sink into the skin.

What new beauty treatment will you be treating yourself to? A good clay or charcoal face mask to cleanse my pores.

What's your favourite beauty hack? Conceal under your eyes with one to two shades lighter than your skin tone to really brighten up your face. I also drench my hair with coconut oil and sleep in it once a week to keep it healthy and strong.

What's your favourite beauty DIY? Coffee scrubs make for the perfect exfoliant. Just mix some ground coffee in with a tablespoon of natural coconut oil.

What's your perfect Saturday night look? False lashes are definitely the key and a good contour and highlight never goes astray. As for hair, I always like to let my locks hang loose and wavy.

Do you wear much makeup in your down time? A basic BB cream, plus a natural brow and brown mascara.



RACHAEL BROOK
[youtube.com/
TheRachaelBrook](http://youtube.com/TheRachaelBrook)

What's unique about your beauty blog?

I'm a make-up artist and was inspired to start a beauty blog about five years ago when I couldn't find many professionals like myself sharing their tips and tricks with the everyday beauty lover.

Fave new release? I'm excited about the Models Prefer Contour Collection. It's an affordable highlighting and contouring palette and I'm looking forward to playing with it in my tutorials.

What's your favourite make-up hack?

For creating sharp edges on your winged eyeliner, use sticky tape to create a guide.

What's your favourite beauty DIY? I love making exfoliants by adding bicarbonate of soda to face and body cleansers.

What's your secret to making your make-up last all day long? Priming my skin with products that suit my skin type and address any skin concerns – then finishing off my make-up with a setting spray.

What's your perfect Spring Racing Carnival hair and make-up look? Wavy hair with a headpiece, but not a fascinator. I like rabbit ears, hats, and head chains. For make-up, a winged liner with beautiful shading and glowing skin.

Do you wear much make-up in your down time? I always wear a highlighter, a little bit of concealer and a lip balm.

Strobing or contouring? Strobing, always!

MICHELLE CROSSAN
[youtube.com/
BeautyLifeMichelle](http://youtube.com/BeautyLifeMichelle)

What's your day job? Blogging and vlogging is my day job! It has always been a dream of mine to turn my hobbies into a career.

What spring trends are you keen to try? I'm very keen to embrace the whole 'strobing' trend.

How do you change your skincare routine for spring? I crank up the SPF and tend to opt for lighter serums and moisturisers.

What's your secret to making your make-up last all day long? Urban Decay All Nighter Setting Spray is a godsend product. Also, working with your make-up in small, thin layers and setting with powder will help to keep your base in place.



What's your favourite beauty DIY? Cold teaspoons on tired eyes.

What's your perfect Spring Racing

Carnival look? Bronzed skin, gold eyeshadow and a vibrant, bold lip. For hair, a relaxed chignon looks chic and sophisticated, but not overdone.

And your go-to Saturday night look?

Smoky eyes and glossy lips! I also like to use curling tongs on my hair to create big, bouncy waves.

DANIELLE MANSUTTI youtube.com/danimansutti

What's your day job? I'm lucky to have my hobby as my job, as I am a full-time YouTuber.

What spring trends are you keen to try? For that dewy look, I'd love to practise strobing for that highlighted finish. I also can't wait to switch my warm jumpers for cute crochet tops and bohemian-inspired skirts.

Any product releases you're excited about? Too Faced Stardust by Vegas Nay Eyeshadow Palette – it has a perfect mix of warm-toned colours.

What's your secret to making your make-up last all day long?

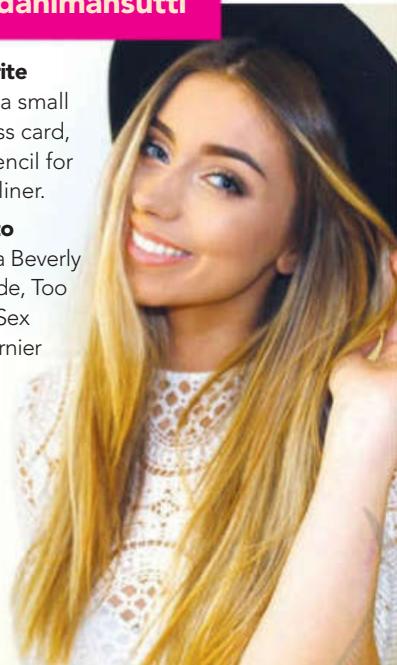
Estee Lauder Double Wear foundation. Also, using a pressed powder over your make-up.

What's your favourite makeup hack? Cut a small triangle in a business card, and use this as a stencil for perfect winged eyeliner.

What are your go-to products? Anastasia Beverly Hills Dipbrow Pomade, Too Faced's Better than Sex Mascara and the Garnier BB Cream to even out the skin, but not make it thick and cakey.

Strobing or contouring?

Contouring. Love the way it enhances your natural features.



spray afterwards, and carrying a powder for touch-ups.

What's your perfect Spring Racing Carnival hair and make-up look? I love to curl my hair and create either a half updo or full updo. For make-up, I like to use colours that tie in with the colours of my outfit.

What are your go-to, everyday products?

Brow products, eyeliner and mascara and foundation.

Strobing or contouring? Strobing, the glow is very glam.

RACHEL ANDERSON youtube.com/rachelleea

What's your day job? I am a full-time blogger and vlogger. I spend a large portion of my day maintaining my social media accounts and YouTube channel, which combines beauty, lifestyle and entertainment.

How do you change your beauty routine for spring? I like to lighten

up the colours to soft pinks and peaches, use glosses and keep my foundation light.

Any product releases you're excited about? Urban Decay Smoky Eyeshadow Palette.

What's your secret to making your make-up last all day long? A primer beforehand and a setting



YOUR BEST > FLAUNT IT

ASH QUINN

ozproductjunkie.blogspot.com.au

What's unique about your beauty blog?

I like to think my readers enjoy my mix of high-end and budget products. Sometimes a \$5 mascara is better than a \$60 one.

What's your day job? I'm an executive producer at a TV production company.

What spring trend are you keen to

try? I'm really keen to get into pastel hair colour! I'm too scared to actually dye it but there are some great one-wear products out like Fudge Urban Colour Hair Art sprays.

Fave beauty treatment right now? I'm getting married in February, so I'm starting to focus on quality skincare treatments and cosmeceuticals.

What's your secret to making your make-up last all day long?

I like priming with Laura Mercier's Oil Free Foundation Primer and a waterproof powder like Maybelline NY's 24H Waterproof Powder applied with a damp Real Techniques Miracle Complexion Sponge.

What's your favourite hair hack? If you're finding that your hair feels quite weighed down, try using your conditioner first and then shampoo.

What's your favourite beauty DIY? I tint my brows at home using 1000 Hour Eyelash and Brow Dye Kit. It's so easy and saves me a bomb.

What's your perfect spring racing look?

My father was a jockey for 38 years, so I'm no stranger to the track. My go-to look is perfected skin, a bold pink or orange lip with a bit of liner across the top.

KATERINA WILLIAMS
[youtube.com/
KaterinaBeautyBlog](http://youtube.com/KaterinaBeautyBlog)

What's unique about your beauty blog? I like to think I bring a bit of my personality to my posts and videos.

How do you change your beauty routine for spring? I switch products to help combat oily skin, as the humidity makes it go crazy.

Any product releases you're excited about? I'm excited for the new MAC collection!



RUBY GOLANI
[youtube.com/
RubyGolani](http://youtube.com/RubyGolani)

What inspired you to start your blog? I used to suffer with cystic acne and there wasn't anyone online who I could relate to about make-up and skincare, so I decided to start my own channel. I'm now a YouTube ninja, creating beauty tutorials online and writing articles on my blog.

What spring make-up trend are you keen to try? Lilac is going to be huge on the eyes!

Any product releases you're excited about? The SK-II R.N.A Power range. This line just came out and it's transformed my skin completely.

What new beauty treatment will you be treating yourself to? I

recently treated my hair to an Olaplex treatment and it's erased all the chemical damage and broken bonds [from extensions].

What's your favourite make-up hack? Using mascara as a gel liner.

What's your favourite beauty DIY? A pinch of raw sugar, a little bit of honey and a touch of coconut oil make for an awesome lip scrub!

What are your go-to, everyday products? I love the CK one 3 in 1 Foundation. A serum, primer and pigment in one, it looks like a second layer of skin.

Strobing or contouring? Contouring wins every time!

sun-kissed dewy skin and a soft pink lip colour.

And your go-to Saturday night look? Very glam, bronzed, and smoky on the eyes, long lashes, glowing skin and a natural-coloured lip.

Any spring-themed tutorials in the works? Yes! I am stepping out of my comfort zone and wearing colours I don't normally reach for.

TRY IT NOW

Sheet Masks

South Korean women are always ahead of the curve when it comes to beauty. Their latest obsession? Sheet masks. January Jones and Karlie Kloss are fans, even posting selfies on Insta as evidence.

Sheet masks are perfect for low-maintenance beauty types. Made from cloth or paper drenched in essence, they're a quick and easy way to deliver concentrated doses of hydration and active ingredients to travel-wearied, winter-ravaged faces.

Apply for 10 to 15 minutes and let your skin absorb the nourishing goodness. You don't even need to rinse it off afterwards – just work in the excess product with the tips of your fingers.

There are literally thousands of options on the market. Some contain humectants like glycerin and hyaluronic acid, while others are packed with proven actives like retinol and vitamin C. Ingredients aside, the magic lies in the sheets themselves. You're applying the product and occluding it, preventing evaporation and encouraging absorption. Your skin is left feeling spongy, plump and moisturised in an instant.

Toss a few into your weekender bag for an express facial while you're travelling. And in summer, you can even keep them in the fridge.

OUR PICKS

- SK-II Facial Treatment Mask, sk-ii.com.au
- Dr. Jart+ Dermask Clearing Solution™ Ultra-Fine Microfiber Sheet Mask, sephora.com.au
- Skin Republic Brightening Vitamin C Face Mask Sheet, theskinrepublic.com.au



YOUR BEST
MOVE IT

WALK IT OFF

When it comes to common ideas of fat loss and firming, walking falls behind higher-octane activities such as running. Yet strolling could be your secret weapon in buffing up.



HEALTH

Not only is walking a bona fide fat loss candidate, it appears to be superior to running in reducing disease risk. A brisk walk was shown to lower the risk of heart disease, high blood pressure and diabetes slightly more than running when the same amount of energy was expended in a recent study. The health benefits of walking for an hour are approximately equal to those from a half-hour run. "Walking and running provide an ideal test of the health benefits of moderate-intensity walking and vigorous-intensity running because they involve the same muscle groups and the same activities performed at different intensities," says Paul Williams of the Lawrence Berkeley National Laboratory, where the study was conducted. Among 33,000 runners and 15,000 walkers, running a kilometre cut the risk of high blood pressure by 4.2 per cent while walkers who expended comparable energy realised a 7.2 per cent reduction in hypertension risk. Risk of high cholesterol fell by 4.3 per cent for running each kilometre and seven per cent for walking. Heart disease risk fell by 4.5 per cent for running and 9.3 per cent for walking. Diabetes risk dropped 12 per cent for both.

THE RULES:

Substitute a couple of runs per week with walking or walk for every cardio workout, aiming for one of the duration targets above, depending on your goals.

FAT LOSS

Furious reps and all-out sprints have unjustly earned renown as superior fat loss moves according to owner and founder of Blue Sky Fitness Amanda Ferguson (blueskyfitness.com.au). Power walking is the best form of exercise for fat loss, she says. "Power walking is a lower impact exercise, where the risk of injury is less when compared to running," Ferguson says. PT Jarrad Sullivan from Jetts says walking is at least on par with running and can outpace its faster counterpart for certain people. "Walking will be more beneficial for those who are just starting to lose weight or for those with health problems. For people who are overweight, walking can be less stressful on the body as it is a low-impact exercise," Ferguson says. According to a 2007 study published in *The Journal of the American Medical Association*, just 30 minutes of brisk walking, five days per week, is enough to lose weight. Those who walked 60 minutes per day showed a significant loss in weight, shedding 12 to 14 per cent of their starting weight when consuming 1,500 calories a day. The study also concluded that the amount of time involved in a metabolic fitness routine is more influential than the distance covered.

Contrary to the image of a foreshore stroll, walking for fat loss needs to meet specific intensity criteria. "What you want to aim for is to increase your speed and distance over time. If you want to see results, you need to step out of your comfort zone, increase your heart rate and challenge yourself," Ferguson says. Runners can also benefit from walking, although the lower calorie burn per minute should be factored in to training session length. "If you have been a runner for a long time, and you now need to walk to maintain your weight loss goals, you will just have to walk for longer periods of time to get the same amount of calories burnt," Sullivan says. He suggests adding hills or steps. "The best surfaces are flat, firm, but not too hard. Avoid concrete if possible as this can be a source of high stress on your hip knee and ankle joints."

THE RULES:

For fat loss, aim to walk four to six days a week. "Try and aim toward walking a minimum of 30 to 60 minutes per day," Sullivan says.

Nordic walking (also known as pole walking) is another option for those interested in walking to aid weight loss. Energy consumption increases by an average of 20 per cent when using poles compared to ordinary walking.

ENDURANCE

If your idea of cardio fitness is inseparably linked to treadmills, spin class and 5km runs – and you beat yourself up for missing a day – you may be coping a flogging for nothing. While it can't rival running for building endurance, walking is a worthy stand-in once you're at a good baseline. "It can be enough to maintain your general fitness, but not just with a stroll around your neighbourhood," says PT and owner of Beachside Personal Fitness Tina Rutzou (beachfitness.com.au). To make walking work for cardio fitness maintenance, planning is key. Accredited practising exercise physiologist Anna-Louise Moule from Beyond Exercise Studio agrees (beyondstudio.com.au). "If you have always been a runner, walking will be enough to help maintain the health benefits of aerobic exercise and some baseline fitness, but not to maintain your fitness at the same level it is when running," Moule says. If you're walking to maintain fitness, planning guards against missing the mark. "Map out your route before you leave home and aim to walk around five to six kph the whole time," Rutzou says. Yet the key performance indicators are an ideal benchmark; don't fall into the trap of thinking that if you can't meet them, you shouldn't bother.

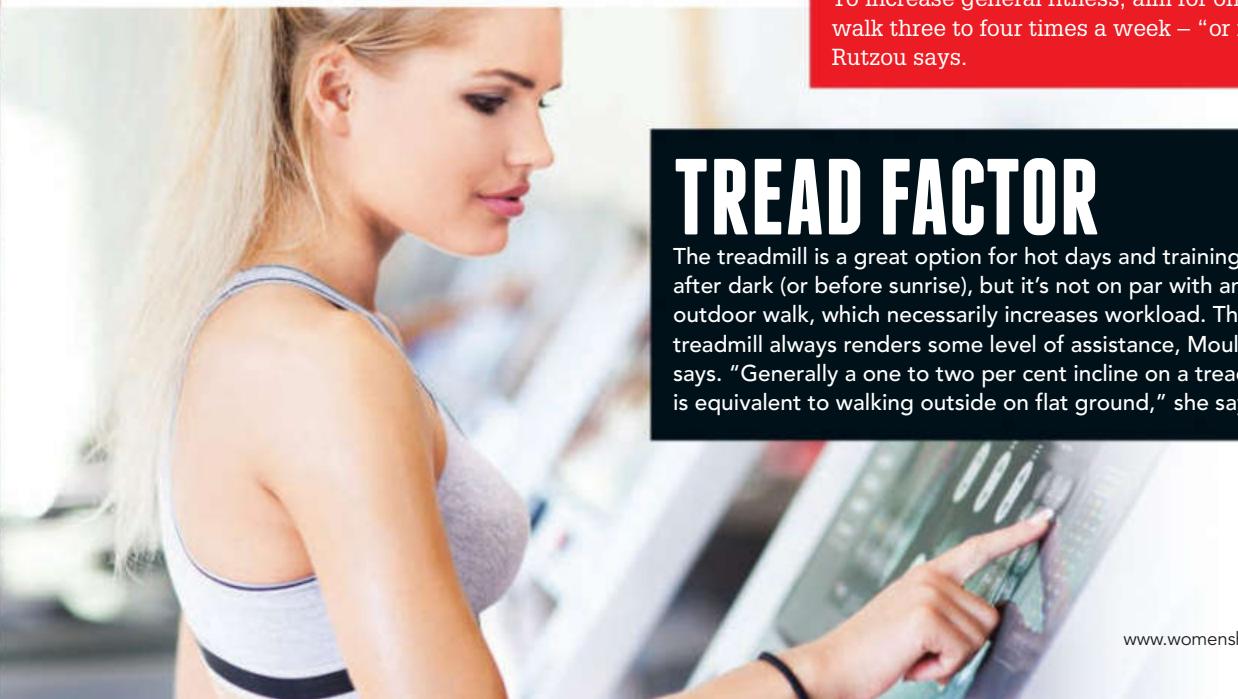
If your goal is increasing fitness levels, Moule says planning becomes more important. Workouts need to be structured with measurable goals such as time taken to cover a certain distance and perceived intensity. "If each week you set a goal of covering more distance in a set time or increasing your time walking, then you will increase your fitness levels," Moule says. If you're accustomed to running, you'll need to adjust to longer workouts, Moule cautions. The time per session for walking to improve endurance is greater than that for running due to the lower intensity. For improving endurance by walking alone, the time required is longer than running to account for the reduced intensity.

THE RULES:

To increase general fitness, aim for one to two hours per walk three to four times a week – "or more if you can", Rutzou says.

TREAD FACTOR

The treadmill is a great option for hot days and training after dark (or before sunrise), but it's not on par with an outdoor walk, which necessarily increases workload. The treadmill always renders some level of assistance, Moule says. "Generally a one to two per cent incline on a treadmill is equivalent to walking outside on flat ground," she says.



FORM GUIDE

Walking reduces injury risk compared to running, but poor form can still lead to injury. "Bad posture and running are a really bad combination and cause injuries like shin splints, hamstring pain, lower back and shoulder problems," Rutzou says. "Whether you walk or run, make sure you do it past a shop window from time to time and check out your posture. Chest up, shoulders back and relaxed, head up and have your body over your feet (not in front or behind your feet)."

CHECK YOUR TECHNIQUE BEFORE YOU SET OFF.

FOR POWERWALKING...

- Stand tall – think about your posture. Pelvic floor turned on, shoulders back and down, pelvis tucked under, tummy in and head up!
- Taking comfortable strides, lead with your heel, rolling through your instep and pushing off with the ball of your foot.
- Keep your arms and hands relaxed, usually holding them at a 90-degree angle, swinging them forward and back and keeping them close to the sides of your body.
- Every step you take, squeeze your butt cheeks at the back to work your butt muscles. Keep your belly button held back towards your spine to work your abs.
- Relax your breathing and walk as fast as you can, building up the pace as you get fitter.

FOR RUNNING...

HEAD: The way you hold your head when you run will determine your posture. Look ahead to where you are running, not down at your feet.

ARMS: Your hands control the tension in your upper body while your arms and the way they swing work together with your leg stride to drive you forward. Keep your hands unclenched. Your arms should swing forwards and back, not across your body, and between waist and lower chest level. Your elbows should be bent at about 90 degrees.

SHOULDERS: Your shoulders need to stay relaxed; think about dropping them away from your ears. While running you may find they start to creep up towards your ears again and you may start to feel tense. Relax them and shake them out. Your shoulders should remain level and not drop from one side to the other.

TORSO: The position of your torso is affected by your head and shoulders. If your head and shoulders are in the correct position, your torso and back will naturally straighten to allow you to run in an efficient, upright position that will promote lung capacity and stride length.

LEGS: Efficient endurance runners require a slight knee lift versus a high knee lift when sprinting. When running with the proper stride length, your feet should land directly underneath your body. When your foot strikes the ground, your knee should be slightly flexed so that it can bend naturally on impact. If your lower leg (below the knee) extends out in front of your body, your stride is too long.

HIPS: Your hips are your centre of gravity, and are key to good running posture. If you have the right torso position, your hips will follow. They should be pointing straight ahead.

ANKLES/FEET: To run well, you need to push off the ground with maximum force. With each step, your foot should hit the ground lightly and land between your heel and mid-foot. Keep your ankle flexed as your foot rolls forward to create more force as you push-off again. As you roll onto your toes, try to spring off the ground. You should feel your calf muscles propelling you forward on each step. ■

GRUNT WALK

Strength training and walking are ideal bedfellows, says head trainer at Step Into Life Brighton (stepintolife.com.au) Melinda Hiatt, who runs a 16-week beginners' program integrating short running and walking intervals. "Popular online programs will get you to a fun run, be it 5 km or marathon, although no running programs I've found include strength training to address common running injuries that can be easily prevented," she says. Strength training can reduce the risk of injuries from the impact of running alongside structured strength training.

THE RULES:

The following strength training exercises should be performed three to four times a week, especially before going for a run, Hiatt says.

1. Squats (20 reps)
2. Step-ups (20 reps on each leg)
3. Clam (20 reps on each side)
4. Bridge (20 reps)
5. Plank (3 x 20 second holds)

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MEGA COUNTDOWN PLAN

WITH FROCK SEASON IN FULL SWING AND NANO-WEEKS UNTIL SUMMER, IT'S TIME TO HANG UP YOUR COAT, DUST OFF YOUR SWIMSUIT AND TWEAK YOUR FITNESS ROUTINE. WE ASKED TOP HEALTH AND FITNESS PROS HOW TO GET SUMMER READY IN RECORD TIME (WHO'S GOT TIME FOR FAFFING?)

BY MADELINE LAKOS

Long, warm evenings. White sneakers everywhere. A letterbox filled with swimwear catalogues. On one hand you're itching to tear off your trackies and flaunt a neoprene one-piece. On the other, the thought of baring your somatic real estate makes you wish for an eternal winter. (Just us?)

In an ideal world we'd embrace our bodies as they are, forgiving ourselves for eating a bit more over winter and committing to move a bit more; not so we felt okay being seen sans cable knit, but to show our bodies how grateful we are that their tireless efforts afford us the freedom to live as we wish. Phew. In the real world, it's incredibly

hard to resist cultural pressure to 'shape up' for summer. The good news is that simply moving more will make you feel better about yourself by lending a sense of empowerment and showering your brain with endorphins – no mofo sprints or five spin classes a week required. In fact, even yoga is fair game.

If you are intent on losing fat or toning, adding strategic moves to a vitality-oriented program will do it.

Depending on what 'summer ready' means to you, choose your own adventure with a little guidance from these three experts.



ED BODY

SHEENA-LAUREN

PERSONAL TRAINER, FITNESS MODEL AND FORMER ATHLETE

WHAT DOES SUMMER READY MEAN TO YOU?

"In summertime I love to unveil my crop and shorts obsession, so stomach and butt are an all-time focus."

THE CHANGE-UP

"My winter fitness, more often than not, is confined to gym walls, which means more weights, and with this comes goals to lift heavier with fewer repetitions," Sheena-Lauren says. "Variety is key for sustained results. So, by the end of winter, I'm keen to mix it up by taking my workouts outdoors; with all the open space, I tend to do a lot more cardio in the form of running."

1. Run more

If you think a perky butt and taut tummy are built on time in the weights room, you're only half right. Calorie-burning cardio is a vital part of achieving tone, by gently

chipping away at any extra body fat while also improving your health. "I feel it's only natural to retain a little more body fat in winter, so with all the extra kilometres I clock up, I do tend to sport a leaner frame,"

says Sheena-Lauren. "Running is an all-over body workout and an effective way to burn lots of extra calories and shed that winter weight." While all cardio is beneficial to calorie burn, studies have shown that high-intensity interval training (like sprint work) is superior. A 2008 study published in the *International Journal of Obesity* concluded that 20 minutes of high-intensity interval training (HIIT) resulted in more than three times as much fat lost compared to 40 minutes of steady-state cardio.

A more recent study published in *Applied Physiology, Nutrition and Metabolism* credited sprint work – four-to-six 30-second, all-out sprints performed three times per week for six weeks – with an eight per cent decrease in fat mass, as well as improved running speed (4.8 per cent) and maximal oxygen consumption. "Think high intensity, short bursts and minimal recovery," says Sheena-Lauren.

Start doing some specific exercise such as crunches for more defined abs and squats for a tighter and perkier butt.

best friend. "Group fitness environments such as crossfit are buzzing this time of year – this type of training generally consists of higher reps and lesser weight, different to my fewer reps and heavier weight during winter, which results in a lot more sweating and puffing, making for a great way to lean up and develop strong but leaner muscle tone," says

Sheena-Lauren. The general consensus on weights for tone without bulk is 15 to 25 reps, which means lighter weights or body weight.

"Add in lots of body weight reps where you can and ensure you go hard and puff hard." For more hypertrophy (that's science-speak for muscle bulk) you'll need to increase your weight so that you're maxing out at eight to 12 reps instead.

3. Develop good diet habits

The pursuit of a flat tummy doesn't end in the gym. Tweaking your diet will help boost your results. "Eliminating sugars and processed starchy carbohydrates such as pastas and white breads can help reduce inflammation and bloating around the stomach," Sheena-Lauren says. This works by simply eliminating many high-glycaemic index (GI), low fibre and typically 'naughty' foods. Low-GI carbohydrates, often in the form of whole grains and sweet potato, prevent the fabled energy crash that often leaves you craving treats, as well as providing adequate fibre to keep you 'regular' (if you know what we mean).

THE PLAN

HOW I EAT

Breakfast	Coconut and chocolate oats (3/4 cup rolled oats, 1/2 cup coconut milk, 1 tbsp chia seeds, 30 g chocolate protein powder, 1 tsp rice malt syrup)
Snack	30 g walnuts and 50 g cheese
Lunch	Roasted chicken and rye salad sandwich with avocado, tomato, cheese and rocket
Snack	2 boiled eggs and veg sticks with pure state peanut butter
Dinner	Oven-baked fish and green pine nut salad

HOW I TRAIN

Monday	Weighted warrior circuit
Tuesday	HIIT sprints
Wednesday	Rest
Thursday	Weighted warrior circuit
Friday	HIIT sprints
Saturday	Active recovery (Bikram yoga, swim or slow jog)
Sunday	Rest

2.Target and tone

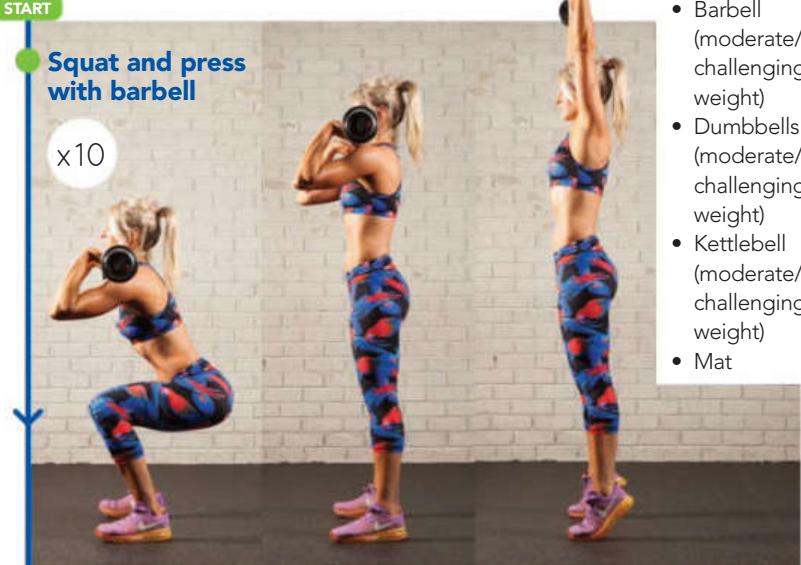
"We've all heard it before; you can't spot-reduce fat, but the good news is that we can target where we want to tone," says Sheena-Lauren. In addition to your increased cardio, a curated toning regime will put you on the path to your best ever summer curves. "Start doing some specific exercise such as crunches for more defined abs and squats for a tighter and perkier butt."

If you're not a huge fan of the weight's room, we've got some bad news. When it comes to all-over tone, lifting is your

WORKOUT

WORDS AND WORKOUT BY SHEENA-LAUREN
IMAGES BY DAMIEN BOWERMAN

WEIGHTED WARRIOR CIRCUIT



x10

You'll need:

- Skipping rope
- Barbell (moderate/challenging weight)
- Dumbbells (moderate/challenging weight)
- Kettlebell (moderate/challenging weight)
- Mat

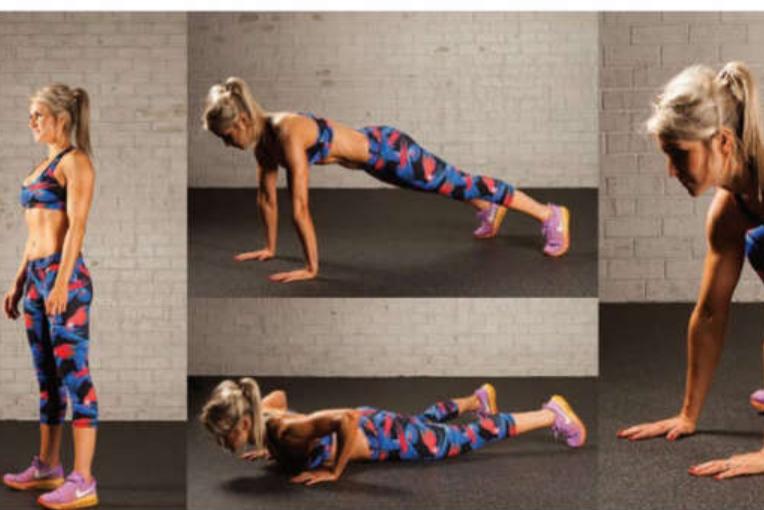


x10



Push-ups with
dumbbell row backs

x10



Burpees

x10

HIIT SPRINTS



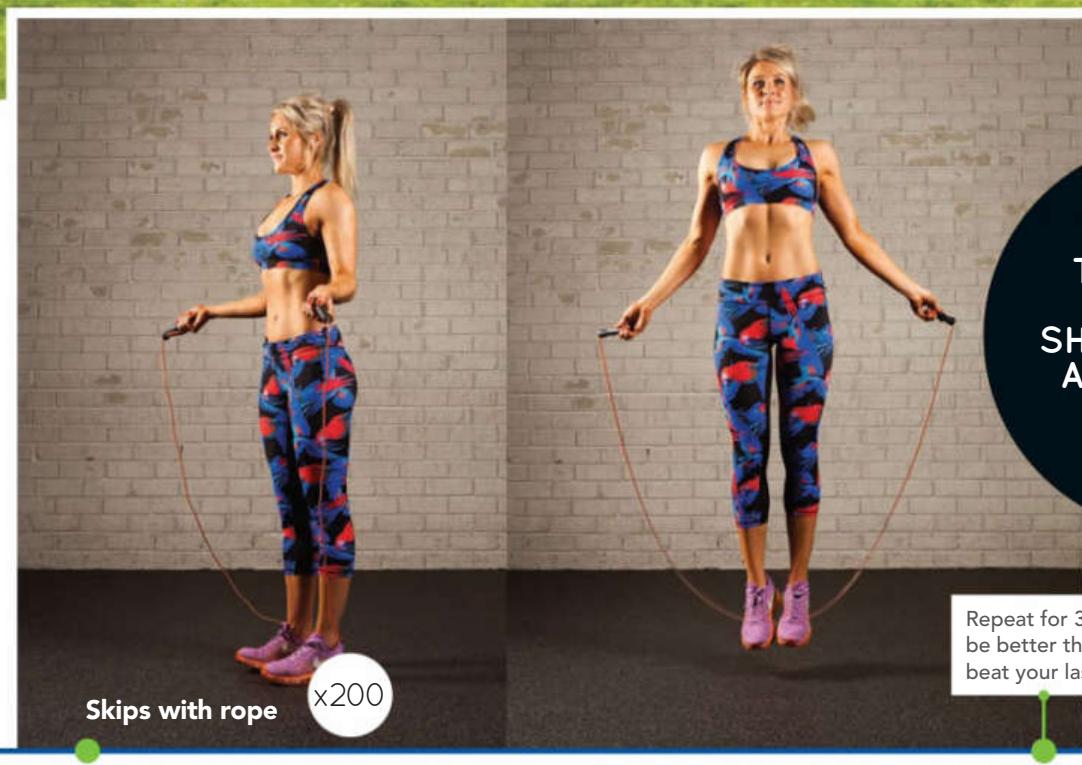
You'll need:

- 2 x cones
- 2 x mats or towels

Measure out roughly 100 meters. At one end you will do 10 push-ups and at the other you will do 10 sit-ups. Sprint from one end to the other six times, ensuring you do your 10 push-ups and 10 sit-ups at each end without stopping.



Rest for two minutes once you have finished. Repeat three more times.



“
THINK HIGH
INTENSITY,
SHORT BURSTS
AND MINIMAL
RECOVERY.
”

Repeat for 30 minutes and always aim to be better than you were yesterday and beat your last number of circuits!





FEELING VITAL

MADDY KING MODEL AND KX PILATES AMBASSADOR

WHAT DOES SUMMER READY MEAN TO YOU?

"Feeling healthy, fit and ready to enjoy my favourite time of year."

THE CHANGE-UP

"When the warmer weather is approaching I naturally start thinking about lighter food options and getting out to do more activities," says King. "Being healthy and feeling good is my main focus rather than watching the scales or putting myself on a strict diet; when everything in the inside is working properly, it definitely shows on my skin, body and mind."

1. Start slow

"When trying to lose weight, put on weight, tone up or whatever your goal may be, the best result that has worked for me is making healthy lifestyle changes rather than a drastic change that you cannot keep up," says King. Spring fitness and diet regimes are frequently built on a desire for rapid results (cue juice detox and OTT workout plan), which turns out to be largely counterproductive. A recent study presented by the European Congress on Obesity asked two weight loss groups to consume a

THE PLAN

HOW I EAT

Breakfast	2 probiotics before eating and a smoothie (hemp protein powder, banana or berries, coconut water, handful of spinach, spoonful of goat's yoghurt and soaked chia seeds) or a vegetable omelette
Snack	Vegetable juice and a handful of nuts or vegetable sticks and organic dip
Lunch	Grilled chicken salad with spinach, avocado, seeds, cranberries, olive oil, apple cider vinegar and lemon juice, and fermented cabbage or sauerkraut (optional)
Snack	2 tablespoons of Greek yoghurt, hemp seeds with a few berries and a green tea
Dinner	Poached or grilled fish with herb and spiced vegetables and kombucha (I get mine from a health food store)
Supper	Peppermint tea

HOW I TRAIN

Every morning I start with a few breathing techniques and some simple yoga stretches.

Monday	Morning walk and jog (45 mins)
Tuesday	KX Pilates and a 30-minute walk
Wednesday	Full-body weights circuit and afternoon walk (1hr)
Thursday	KX Pilates and a 30-minute walk
Friday	Home yoga and 1-hour walk/jog
Saturday	KX Pilates or yoga and 1-hour walk
Sunday	1-hour walk

very low-calorie diet (VLCD) of 500 calories a day for five weeks, or a low-calorie diet (LCD) of 1,250 calories a day for 12 weeks. Both lost a similar amount of weight, but 18 per cent of the weight lost by the VLCD group was lean muscle mass (which is the stuff you want to hang on to) compared to only 7.7 per cent in the LCD group. Not only does lean muscle mass make you look toned, it also regulates your metabolism; meaning that muscle-wasting weight loss is harder to sustain in the wake of a jeopardised RMR, or resting metabolic rate, i.e. the energy you burn while doing nothing at all. "Often rapid diets or changes to the body can lead back to worse results than when you started," says King. "Lifestyle changes don't get the quickest results but they are easier to stick to and get better, longer-lasting results in the end."

2. Train outdoors

"When it's warmer I choose to train outside more; the fresh air and sunshine is great for an instant energy boost and makes you feel happy," says King. Leaving the confines of the gym for the great outdoors has numerous perks. Sunshine is our primary source of vitamin D – necessary for bone health – and helps regulate melatonin, a hormone produced when it's dark to bring on sleep. Melatonin plays a part in maintaining your circadian rhythm, responsible for your sleep-wake cycle, hormone release and body temperature (among other things). According to the National Institute of General Medical Sciences, too much melatonin – or not enough light – has been linked to insomnia, obesity, diabetes and depression. (Yikes.) Disclaimer: This doesn't mean you have our permission to sunbathe until you're brown as a nut. Regulating melatonin shouldn't come at the price of sun damage and, potentially, skin cancer, so protect yourself with sunnies, hat and sunscreen. King loves

clocking up some sun time early in the day, before UV levels become too intense. "I do my own basic yoga in the mornings on my balcony... there are online videos that can teach you how to do this and you can go through the exercises slowly or speed up the exercises to create a full-body workout and work up a sweat," she says.

3. Prioritise gut health

All the crunches in the world won't give you a flat tum if your diet doesn't support it. "These days many women have gut issues, whether it's bloating, pain, flatulence, constipation or diarrhoea; it is extremely important to have good gut health to be able to remove toxins and absorb nutrients," says King. According to The Gut Foundation (thegutfoundation.com.au), 50 per cent of Australians will struggle with their digestive health at some stage. The good thing is a number

of common complaints, like bloating and cramps, can be at least partially addressed with diet. "For minor digestion issues my top tips include prioritising probiotics and prebiotics,

as well as fermented and nutrient-rich foods," says King. Probiotics are good bacteria that can help ease many digestive health complaints by helping move food through your gut efficiently; they can be found in different forms in yoghurt, cultured dairy products and fermented foods such as kimchi and sauerkraut. According to a 2006 study in the *Journal of Applied Microbiology*, probiotic consumption can also enhance immunity, increase nutrient availability and reduce the symptoms of lactose intolerance.

Lifestyle changes don't get the quickest results but they are easier to stick to and get better, longer lasting results in the end.

Prebiotics, on the other hand, are non-digestible fibre that acts as food for probiotics, encouraging them to grow in the gut.

These can be sourced from

many different fruits and vegetables and whole grains. "I try to make sure that every day I'm eating foods that are nourishing my body; this includes lots of fresh vegetables, fruit, animal or vegan protein, nuts, seeds, legumes and some whole grains, as well as lots of water and herbal teas."



WORKOUT

WORDS AND WORKOUT BY KX GROUP FOUNDER AARON SMITH
MODELS: PIA MUEHLENBECK AND CHERIDA FORDE

SUMMER READY PILATES

With the help of KX Pilates, we've got a collection of toning Pilates moves Maddy King loves doing as part of her weekly workout regime.

Tip

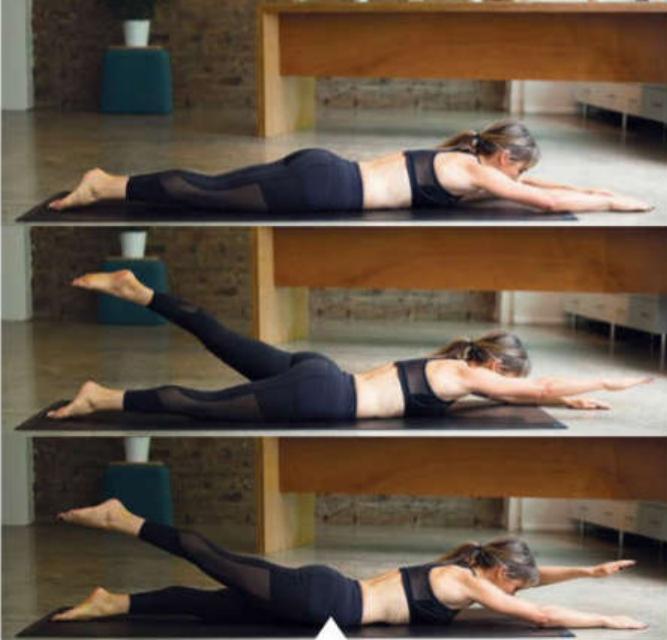
To add intensity to the exercise, at the top of the movement hold for 10 seconds and flipper the legs before relaxing down. You can also add spinal rotation when extending the spine to target the side obliques



Back Extension

start with two or three sets of 12 to 15 repetitions.

1. Engage your abdominals by lifting your belly button up off the mat to support your spine and activate your core.
2. Set your shoulder blades back and down as you slowly lift your upper body off of the mat.
3. Starting with your head, neck and upper back, slowly articulate the lift until your belly button comes off the mat as well as going into full spinal extension. Hold for three to five seconds.
4. Slowly lower down starting with your belly button and then articulate one vertebra at a time down until your hands are the last to be on the mat. Relax your body and relax your shoulders.



● Swimming

start with 2 to 3 sets of 12 to 15 repetitions on each side.

1. Engage your abdominals by lifting your belly button up off the mat to support your spine and activate your core.
2. Reaching out from centre, extend and raise one leg and at the same time raise the opposite arm. Your head will naturally lift up with the spinal extension. Squeeze your glute on the activated side.
3. Hold for two to three seconds then slowly lower down and do alternate side.

● The Superman

start with two to three sets of 15 to 20 repetitions each side.

1. Engage your abdominals by lifting your belly button up to support your spine.
2. Start with a basic kick back on one leg, holding the upper body still and strong.
3. Extend the leg back to straight while aiming to keep the core activated and hips stabilised.
4. When you've got that down, add the upper body into the mix by extending the opposite arm long in unison with the leg. Try to counterbalance the body going into the full exercise.
5. Hold the extension for one to two seconds and then return the arm/leg back down. Repeat on other arm/leg.

Note: Hip stability is the aim of the game here, so keep both hips still and stable the whole time. ■

● Shoulder Stand

start with two sets of 8 to 10 repetitions.

1. Activate your core by drawing down through your navel and lifting up through the pelvic floor.
2. Slowly bring your legs up to the ceiling while your bum stays on the mat and then pause for a brief moment to stop momentum.
3. Using your arms for support, lift your hips up towards the ceiling, bringing your feet over your face. Lift to where you deem comfortable and hold at the top for one to two seconds.
4. Reverse the exercise by slowly rolling down your spine one vertebra at a time until your hips are back on the mat and then slowly lower your legs, keeping them long, down to the floor.



HERE'S WHAT YOU'VE BEEN MISSING

if you haven't been to our Facebook page:

- Updates on health and fitness events, videos, tips, motivational quotes & more!
 - Be a part of the Women's Health and Fitness community



The image is a collage of 10 screenshots from the official Facebook page of Women's Health & Fitness Magazine. The posts include: 1. A post by 'Women's Health & Fitness Magazine' with a photo of cupcakes topped with blackberries and the quote 'It's hard to beat a person that never gives up' attributed to Babe Ruth. 2. A post by 'Women's Health & Fitness Magazine' featuring a woman running and the headline '100+ ways to keep your heart healthy'. 3. A post by 'Women's Health & Fitness Magazine' with a photo of a salad and the headline '100+ ways to keep your heart healthy'. 4. A post by 'Women's Health & Fitness Magazine' with a photo of a woman working out with dumbbells. 5. A post by 'Women's Health & Fitness Magazine' with a photo of a woman in a blue top and the headline 'How to lose fat and keep muscle'. 6. A post by 'Women's Health & Fitness Magazine' with a photo of a woman in a white top and the headline 'How to train and maintain a healthy heart'. 7. A post by 'Women's Health & Fitness Magazine' with a photo of a woman in a white top and the headline 'How to train and maintain a healthy heart'. 8. A post by 'Women's Health & Fitness Magazine' with a photo of a woman in a white top and the headline 'How to train and maintain a healthy heart'. 9. A post by 'Women's Health & Fitness Magazine' with a photo of a woman in a white top and the headline 'How to train and maintain a healthy heart'. 10. A post by 'Women's Health & Fitness Magazine' with a photo of a woman in a white top and the headline 'How to train and maintain a healthy heart'.

YOUR BEST » MOVE IT

BIKINI BODY BASE

Seeking a bangin' bod to flaunt beachside? We asked the experts how get the most out of your bikini body plan.

Words: Madeline Lakos



ALEXA TOWERSEY CREATING CURVES PROGRAM

alexatowersey.com.au



Whether you're trained or untrained, what exercise you've done in the past, body composition and somatotype are the tip of the variables iceberg explaining why there is no one-size-fits all approach to fitness. Optimum is not an absolute standard, but needs to be defined against individual goals and nuances that affect how those goals are best reached. "Regular gym goers will have a significant amount of lean muscle already, so by fine-tuning their diet over 12 weeks you see noticeable muscle definition and that typical bikini body," says exercise physiologist and dietitian Gabrielle Maston. Even when exercise is accurately tailored to your variables, other factors can make or break – abs are indeed made in the kitchen. "No amount of squatting or sit ups will spot reduce from this area; the best you can do is eat healthy, lose weight slowly, exercise to tone your body and learn to accept and love your body," Maston says. (Find your diet match from p. 122.) To determine your optimal training style, Maston advises checking your goals against the propositions of respective protocols. "A combination of both weights and cardio is ideal to improve the ability to lose weight," Maston says, noting the merits of lesser-known protocols such as supersets over traditional straight-set workouts to leverage women's superior muscle recovery ability. Other regimes have superior claims against other goals, such as high-intensity interval training for metabolic boosting. You decide. We've dished the basic science to help you critically evaluate the season's hottest body countdown plans for your needs.

DESIGNED BY:

Alexa Towersey – 15 years of experience in the health and fitness industry as a sports and fitness model, athlete and personal trainer, nutrition and lifestyle coach. She's also an internationally certified Polestar Pilates instructor and Precision Nutrition coach.

TIME:

6 weeks

IN A NUTSHELL: This program was built on Towersey's personal experience training model and Miss Australia 2012 Renae Ayris. Its essence is a combination of lower-body and core-dominant workouts designed to (as its name suggests) create sexy curves, but the program also addresses other essentials like 'problem areas', posture and strength. "If you want to improve your posture, change the shape of your body and build a booty to die for without spending hours in the gym, then this program is ideal for you," says Towersey.

TYPE OF TRAINING:

Light weights and body-weight exercises in high-intensity circuits.

TYPE OF DIET: Emphasis on lean protein, leafy vegetables and allowing flexibility.

GYM/NO GYM: Gym

COST: \$49 for a six-week training plan (six days a week) consisting of:

- » Glute activation drills
- » Weight training programs (three per week)
- » Plyometric and interval-based training sessions
- » Additional recommendations for endurance and recovery sessions
- » Lifestyle recommendations and strategies based on your own specific body type
- » Nutritional guidelines and weekly sample menu plan
- » Online support

BIKINI PLAN MARKETPLACE

ASHY BINES BIKINI BODY CHALLENGE

abbbc.ashybines.co

DESIGNED BY:

Ashy Bines – retired model

TIME:

Unlimited

IN A NUTSHELL: The Ashy Bines Bikini Body Challenge is one of the most popular beach body plans on the market. The retired model-come-fitness guru's program, which is based on clean eating and group training, has become so sought after, they now run training sessions in 70 different locations in three countries (Australian, New Zealand and the USA). She says her mission is "To give every girl the self-esteem that she deserves, help her live a healthier, happier lifestyle... whilst of course achieve the bikini body that will help her feel beautiful and confident!"

TYPE OF TRAINING:

Outdoors group training sessions.

TYPE OF DIET: Clean eating

GYM/NO GYM: No gym.

COST: Starts at \$14.95 a week for one training session, online support and a fortnightly body composition test. Their most popular package costs \$49.95 per week and includes:

- » Six group training sessions per week
- » Six weeks of nutrition and goals consultation
- » Online support
- » Fortnightly body composition scans
- » Clean eating recipes
- » Training singlet



FITANGELS 12 WEEK BEACH BODY PROGRAM

fitangels.com.au

DESIGNED BY: Janere Reid – online body transformation coach. She is a 45-year-old single mother of two and accomplished figure model. She has a degree in psychology and 15 years' experience in the fitness industry with eight years competing and coaching fitness and bikini models

TIME: 12 weeks

IN A NUTSHELL: The FitAngels 12 Week Beach Body Program is all about simple, manageable changes that can fit into your work and family life. It's less glitzy than other beach body plans, but a little more practical (i.e. designed specifically for the more mature demographic) too. "Mums or career-oriented women who want something extremely easy to follow that they can fit into their business and family life," says Reid. "It's not pages and pages of illustrations and terminology, just simple instructions to follow which are manageable and effective." It offers an online support option – where you're asked to send progress pictures and measurements direct to Reid weekly – for those who want added accountability. You can also ask her for expert advice whenever you need it and you'll join a private group of FitAngels who will help you stay motivated!

TYPE OF TRAINING: Body weight and light circuits and mixed-intensity cardio.

TYPE OF DIET: Balanced wholefoods with specific macro breakdowns to lean and tone.

GYM/NO GYM: No gym

COST: \$240, which includes (\$69 without online support option)

- » Delicious calorie-counted meal plans with macro breakdowns
- » Week-to-week exercise programs focusing glutes and abdominals
- » Cardio programs to get you fit and lean
- » Supplement recommendations
- » 12 weeks online support to ensure you reach your goal

WHAT'S YOUR BIKINI TRAINING STYLE?

METABOLISM BOOSTING

HIIT: High-intensity interval training can be short, all-out sprints, or a challenging cardio or weights circuit. It's proven to burn loads of calories in a short period of time and boost EPOC, or post-exercise oxygen consumption, meaning you keep burning even after you've stopped training.

CONDITIONS: "This is a great exercise style; however, it's hard to work at that intensity every day – it's best to mix HIIT with some other lower intensity exercises," says Maston.

CALORIE BURNING

Steady-state cardio: If weight loss is your goal, steady state cardio in the right amount is your friend. 'Steady state' is generally defined as 65 per cent of your maximum heart rate, or a pace that you can maintain for an hour or more. Long runs or cycles are great for this – a long walk, not so much (if the ambition is to burn calories intensity needs to be high enough to do so).

CONDITIONS: "Steady-state cardio is great for burning calories, but it is easy to overdo. Make sure you have at least one rest day per week if you're doing lots of cardio." But if you're also aiming to achieve tone (i.e. avoid that 'skinny but soft' appearance) you'll also need to mix it up with strength training.

TONING

Weights: "There's a saying that cardio will make you a smaller version of yourself, but only weights have the power to truly change the shape of your body, which I think is true," says personal trainer and creator of the Creating Curves program Alexa Towersey. They don't have to be heavy to get results, but for a taut and toned physique, you'll probably have to do some form of strength training. A 2013 article published in the *American College of Sports Medicine's* health and fitness journal found that just using body weight can provide an adequate training load as long as it results in sufficient aerobic and resistance training intensities (i.e. as long as you work hard enough).

CONDITIONS: "If you're training to lose weight, you'll mix in a bit of cardio or HIIT training," says Maston. Weights on their own can create a calorie burn, generally via EPOC and rebuilding muscle (if you've trained hard enough), but it's not as effective as cardio or HIIT burn. ■



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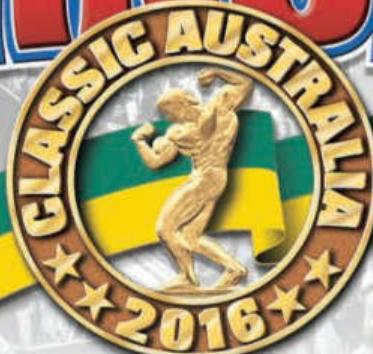


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PRESENTS

ARNOLD



MARCH 18TH, 19TH & 20TH, 2016

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**ONLY
6 MOVES!**

Pre-summer TONING CIRCUIT

WORKOUT/WORDS: NICHELLE LAUS
PHOTOGRAPHY: DAVE LAUS • MODEL: SARAH TEXEIRA



CURL (seated or standing)

TARGET: BICEPS

Sit on a chair and hold a dumbbell in each hand. Starting with your arms straight at your side, bend the elbow and curl the arm up towards your chest, hold, then lower back down. Repeat.

Note: This can be done standing as well.

No time to get to the gym. Spending your group class budget on the mortgage. There are a million excuses not to get moving. But for each one, there's a compelling reason to drop and give us 20. This mini workout is designed to tick maximum boxes while slotting into your lunch hour or between picking the kids up and cooking dinner (or why not while dinner is in the oven?). All you need for this set of six toning moves from *WH&F* trainer Nichelle Laus is the resistance of your own body weight and a set of dumbbells. The fringe benefit – if firming your arms, thighs and butt wasn't enough – is that you'll feel refreshed, refocused and rejuvenated!

The rules

For this workout, cycle through each exercise, one after the other, with minimal rest, aiming for 10 repetitions of each. Once you have completed the whole circuit once, rest for 60 to 90 seconds, then start again from the top.

Repeat one to two more times, time permitting.

Exercises

- SEATED BICEP CURL
- CHAIR DIP
- CHAIR PUSH-UP
- SHOULDER PRESS
- PLIE SQUAT
- CURTSY LUNGE

CHAIR DIP

TARGET: TRICEPS

Face away from the chair. Place your hands behind you on the edge of the seat, shoulder-width apart. With your hands securely in place, step a foot or two away, and straighten your legs and keep heels in contact with the floor. Straighten your arms so that your body is lifted. This is your starting position.

Bend your elbows and lower yourself until your elbows are 90 degrees, hold, and re-straighten back to the starting position. Repeat.





SHOULDER PRESS

TARGET: SHOULDERS

Hold a dumbbell in each hand and sit on a chair.

Plant your feet firmly on the floor hip-width apart. Bend your elbows and raise your upper arms to shoulder height so the dumbbells are at ear level. Push the dumbbells up and in until the ends of the dumbbells touch lightly above your head. Lower back down to the starting position and repeat for amount of desired repetitions.

CURTSY LUNGES

TARGET: QUADS, GLUTES

Stand with your feet hip-width apart, hands off your body. Take a big step back with your left leg, crossing it behind your right. Bend your knees and lower your hips until your right thigh is nearly parallel to the floor. Keep your torso upright and your hips and shoulders as square as possible. Return to start and repeat with your right leg.



AIR PUSH-UP

TARGET: CHEST

Get into a push-up position and place hands on the edge of a sturdy chair, slightly wider than shoulder-width apart. This is your starting position.

Bend arms and lower body until your chest reaches the edge of the chair. Push body up to the starting position, and repeat.

Variation: Knees can remain on the ground throughout the exercise to make it easier.



PLIE SQUAT

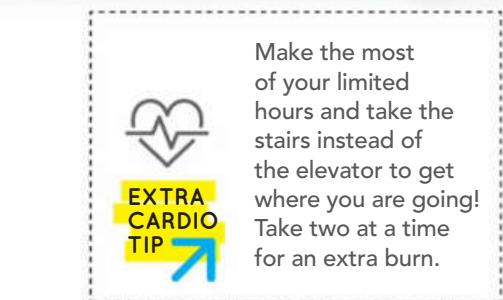
TARGET: GLUTES, HIPS, THIGHS

Hold a dumbbell at the base with both hands and stand straight up. Move your legs so that they are wider than shoulder width apart from each other with your knees slightly bent. Your toes should be facing out.

Slowly bend the knees and lower your legs until

your thighs are parallel to the floor. Press mainly with the heel of the foot to bring the body back to the starting position. Repeat for the recommended amount of repetitions.

Note: Your arms should be stationary while performing the exercise. ■



Low-carb CAKESPO

Perfect for the marquee or backyard soiree, these low-carb confections double as recovery fuel.



5g CARBS

{ Chocolate Zucchini Cake }

MAKES 8 SLICES (73 G EACH)

We used a 10cm wide x 21cm long x 5.5cm deep silicone loaf pan.

Energy 1,021 kJ | Protein 7.4 g | Total fat 20.1 g
Saturated fat 2.5 g | Carbohydrate 5.2 g | Sugars 3.3 g | Fibre 4.8 g

WHAT YOU'LL NEED

- 110 g zucchini
- 2 tbsp (40 ml) water
- 2 tbsp (8 g) instant coffee
- 200 g hazelnut meal
- 4 tbsp (62.5 ml) milk, reduced fat
- 45 g cocoa powder, unsweetened
- 1 tsp (3 g) baking powder
- 3½ tbsp (70 ml) sugar-free maple-flavoured syrup
- 2 eggs
- 20 g dark chocolate (70% cocoa)
- ¾ tsp (3.75 ml) coconut oil
- 20 g hazelnuts, whole

WHAT YOU'LL DO

Preheat the oven to 180°C.

Grease and line a loaf pan (unless using a silicone one).

Grate the zucchini and set aside to drain. Warm the water and dissolve the coffee.

Set aside the dark chocolate, coconut oil and the whole hazelnuts to decorate.

Mix all the remaining ingredients in a bowl.

Pour mixture into the pan and cook for 35 minutes or until a skewer comes out clean.

Cool in the pan for about 15 minutes.

Meanwhile, melt the chocolate and the coconut oil together.

Plate the cake and drizzle the chocolate mixture in bands across the cake and the plate.

Scatter with the hazelnuts.

9g CARBS

Raspberries & Cream

SERVES 1 (345 G). MULTIPLY AS NEEDED.

This protein-packed recipe was designed as an on-the-go breakfast, but we think it's the perfect dessert for fit-conscious guests.

Energy 1,684.9 kJ | **Protein** 43.6 g | **Total fat** 27.4 g | **Saturated fat** 9.6 g
Cholesterol 52.8 mg | **Carbohydrate** 9.3 g | **Sugars** 8.9 g | **Fibre** 10.7 g

WHAT YOU'LL NEED

- 50 g raspberries, fresh or frozen
- 1 tbsp (20 ml) sugar-free maple-flavoured syrup
- 240 g cottage cheese, low fat
- 10 g sunflower seeds
- 1 tsp (2 g) cinnamon
- 20 g flaxseed meal
- 1 Mason jar per serve

WHAT YOU'LL DO

Place the raspberries in a small saucepan with the sugar free maple flavoured syrup and warm through.

Combine the cottage cheese with the sunflower seeds, cinnamon and flaxseed meal.

Stir until combined. Layer in the jar finishing with raspberries.

Place in the refrigerator until ready to go.

Extracted from Carbs by Numbers – 15 g Carbs or Less Per Serve by Sandra Dunbar and Meg Pell // carbsbynubmers.com

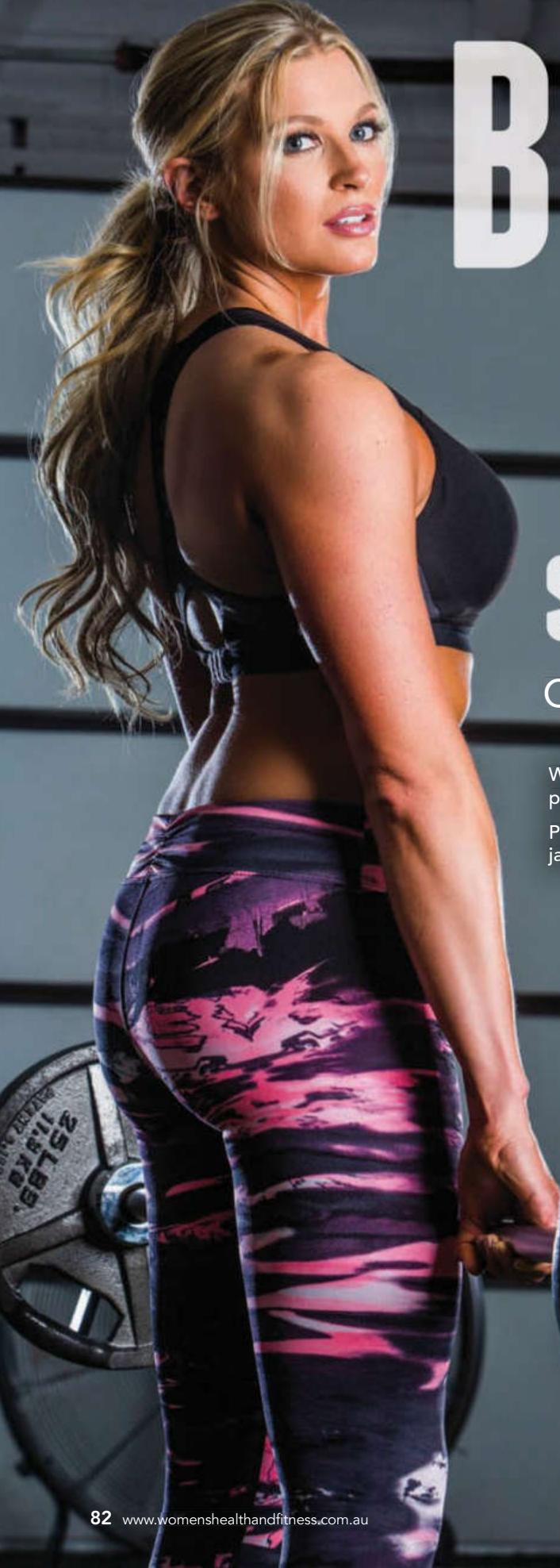
YOUR BEST >> MOVE IT

BUTT & THIGH SCULPT AND BURN

COVER MODEL WORKOUT

Words and workout: Heather Green, certified personal trainer and fitness model

Photography: James Patrick Photography // jamespatrick.com



Spring/summer's sartorial hallmarks are a double-edged sword. While women with a positive perception of their butt and thighs embrace shorter hemlines and short suits, for those with lower half lament, the season is a constant reminder. This workout was formulated to complement your current regimen once or twice a week. Stick to the program and watch your butt and thighs take shape as some moves target toning while the plyometric aspect promotes fat burning. If you are a beginner at lifting weights, start the routine without any weight until you feel comfortable doing the moves. You also can vary the reps/weight based on your goals. Always consult with your doctor before starting any training regimen.

DIRECTIONS:

Perform each circuit three times before moving on to the next one.
Rest for 45 to 60 seconds after each completed circuit.

CHOOSING THE PROPER WEIGHT:

REPS	8 – 12 (LOW)	13 – 15 (MODERATE)	16 – 20 (HIGH)
GOAL	STRENGTH TRAINING/MUSCLE BUILDING	A MIX OF BOTH	MUSCLE ENDURANCE/TONING
WEIGHT	Choose a weight where the final couple of reps are difficult to get through and without compromising your form	Choose a weight somewhere in between the above and below descriptions	Choose a weight where you are able to get through all of the reps with proper form while still feeling a 'burn' in the muscles

WHAT ARE PLYOMETRIC MOVES AND WHY SHOULD WE DO THEM?

Plyometric moves are explosive movements that teach your muscles to exert as much force as possible in the shortest amount of time. These moves, used by many athletes, are a great addition to any workout. They help build strength, burn fat, and can even contribute to a post-workout calorie burn!

WARM-UP: 10 minutes on the treadmill/Stairmaster at a steady pace (short of breath, but still able to hold a conversation).

>> CIRCUIT 1: GOBLET SQUAT // BARBELL HIP THRUSTER // DUMBBELL STEP-UPS <<



<< GOBLET SQUAT

HIGHER WEIGHT/
LOWER REP
(8 – 12 REPS)

TARGETS: Glutes, Quadriceps, Calves, Hamstrings

1. Grab desired weight and stand holding one end of the dumbbell with both hands. Feet should be slightly wider than shoulder-width, toes slightly turned out.
2. Keeping your chest and head up and your back straight, lower into a squat position until your elbows touch the inside of your knees.
3. Return to a standing position and repeat for designated reps.

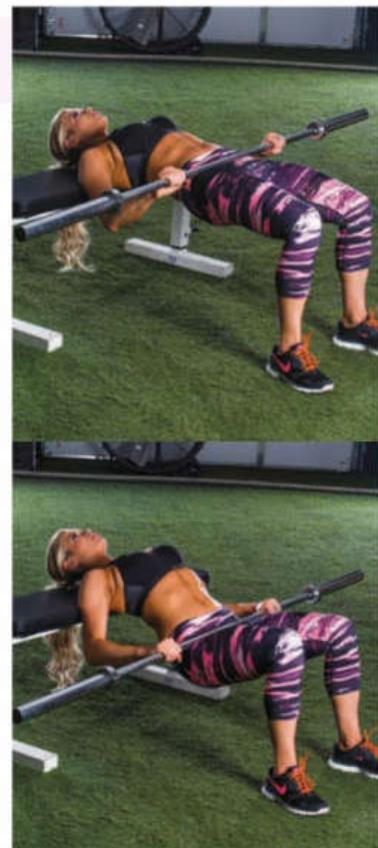
BARBELL HIP THRUSTER >>

HIGHER REP/LOWER WEIGHT
(16 – 20 REPS)

This exercise can also be performed on the ground on a mat (great to start with if you are a beginner). You may want to use a pad on/under the bar so it doesn't dig into your hips.

TARGETS: Glutes, Calves, Hamstrings

1. Begin seated on the ground with your back on a bench. Have a loaded barbell over your legs. Your feet should be planted on the ground.
2. Roll the bar so that it is directly above your hips, and lean back against the bench so that your shoulder blades are near the top of it.
3. Begin the movement by driving through your feet, extending your hips towards the ceiling. Your weight should be supported by your shoulderblades and your feet. Extend as far as possible, squeezing your glutes at the top and then reverse the motion to return to the starting position.





❖ DUMBBELL STEP-UPS WITH ADDED KICKBACK

MODERATE WEIGHT/MODERATE REP (13 – 15 EACH SIDE)

*Choose a platform where the height will put your knee at about a 90-degree angle. The higher the platform, the harder the exercise will be.

TARGETS: Glutes, Quadriceps, Calves, Hamstrings

1. Stand up straight, facing the platform and holding the dumbbells parallel to outside of your legs.
2. Place your right foot on the elevated platform. Using mainly your heel, drive the rest of your body up so you are standing on the platform. Left leg stays off the platform. Extending through the heel, drive your left leg backwards about 90 degrees.
3. Return your left leg and use it to step back down. Step your right leg back down to the starting position as well.
4. Repeat using your left leg. Alternate between your right and left leg for instructed reps.

>> CIRCUIT 2: BARBELL DEADLIFTS // DONKEY KICKS WITH WEIGHT // BOX JUMP-UPS <<



BARBELL DEADLIFTS ☀

HIGHER WEIGHT/LOWER REP (8 – 12 REPS)

TARGETS: Glutes, Hamstrings, Lower Back

1. Grasp the loaded barbell with an overhand grip. You should have a slight bend in your knees and your feet should be about shoulder-width apart. Your torso should be straight.
2. Keeping your knees in place, lower the barbell to the top of your feet by bending at the hips and keeping your back straight. Continue the motion until you feel a stretch in your hamstrings.
3. Start bringing your torso back up straight again by extending your hips until you are at the starting position. Focus on the inhale on the way down and exhale on the way up.
4. Repeat for instructed repetitions.

CAUTION: This exercise should not be performed if you have lower back problems. If you are a beginner to this move, start with very light weight until you get the motion down. Dumbbells may be used as well instead of the barbell.



<< DONKEY KICKS WITH WEIGHT:

LOWER WEIGHT/HIGHER REP (16 – 20 REPS)

TARGETS: Glutes, Hamstrings, Quads

1. Starting on all fours, place a dumbbell in the crease of your right knee.
2. Keeping your knee at a 90-degree angle and your foot flexed, lead with your heel and push it towards the ceiling. You should feel your glutes engage. Do not move your torso. The motion should be all in your hip joint.
3. Return to starting position leading with your knee.
4. Repeat for instructed reps and then switch legs.

BONUS: For an extra booty burn at the end of the instructed reps, hold your leg up at step two for 15 seconds and then pulse for 15 seconds.



<< BOX JUMPS: PLYOMETRIC MOVE (15 – 20 REPS)

*Make sure you have a steady platform that is a height that feels comfortable for you.

TARGETS: Glutes, Quadriceps, Hamstrings, Calves, Adductors, Abductors

1. Stand at the platform about a foot away. Feet should be shoulder-width apart.
2. Do a small motion squat to prepare for jumping and swing your arms behind you.

3. Jump out of the squat position as high as you can to land on top of the platform, swinging your arms forward and up. You should be extending through your hips, knees and ankles. Focus on a soft landing with knees bent.
4. Once landed, stand straight up and either jump back down or step down.
5. Repeat for instructed reps.

>> CIRCUIT 3: FIRE HYDRANT KICKS // YOGI SQUATS // JUMP SQUATS <<



FIRE HYDRANT KICKS ☀

MUSCLE ENDURANCE/TONING (16 – 20 REPS)

TARGETS: Glutes, Abductors

1. Start on all fours. Keep your knee in a bent position and lift your knee away from the midline of your body towards the ceiling. Stop the movement when you are parallel with your torso.
2. Hold the position and using a fast motion kick your leg out.
3. Return your leg back to the bent

- knee position and lower it back down to the floor
4. Repeat for instructed reps and then switch legs.

BONUS: For an extra burn after the instructed reps, hold your leg out in the kick-out position for 15 seconds and then pulse your leg up towards the ceiling for 15 seconds.

BONUS: For an extra burn after completing the instructed reps, hold the parallel position of the move for 15 seconds and pulse your glutes for 15 seconds.



JUMP SQUATS ☀

PLYOMETRIC MOVE (15 – 20 REPS)

TARGETS: Glutes, Quadriceps, Hamstrings, Calves

1. Stand about shoulder-width apart while holding palms together (or whatever feels comfortable to you, some cross their arms).
2. Lower into a squat position, keeping your head up and back straight.
3. Keeping your weight in your heels, swing your arms back for momentum as you jump straight up in the air as high as you can.
4. Make sure you land controlled with your toes touching the ground first. This will help lower the impact on your knees.
5. When you land, immediately squat down and jump again for instructed reps.



<< YOGI SQUATS

MODERATE WEIGHT/MODERATE REP (13 – 15 REPS)

TARGETS: Glutes, Hamstrings, Abductors

1. Grab desired dumbbell weight and stand with your feet slightly wider than your hips, toes pointed outwards.
2. Lower your hips down to the ground so you are essentially hovering.
3. Holding the weight with both hands, press and rest your elbows on the inside of your knees.
4. Keep your feet planted on the

ground and lift towards the ceiling, leading with your glutes. Keep your back straight. Stop when you are parallel to the ground.

5. Return back down to the starting position and repeat for instructed reps.

*Until you feel comfortable in this position, start off using no weight. Warm up by holding the initial pose for a long five seconds, three to five times.

COOL-DOWN: 10 minutes on the treadmill/Stairmaster at a steady pace. Stretch for at least five minutes. ■



GO TEAM!



RAW FITSPO

Gabrielle Maston has been a Brazilian samba dancer, an aerobics instructor and a personal trainer – and if that's not enough to convince you that she's fit, healthy and fabulous, she currently works as a dietitian and exercise physiologist. But even so, Maston isn't immune to body negativity. "I never thought I was worthy enough to have my body printed in a magazine, but it has several times now," she says. "There was a stage in my life that I hated working out because I felt bad about myself and I used it as punishment for eating."

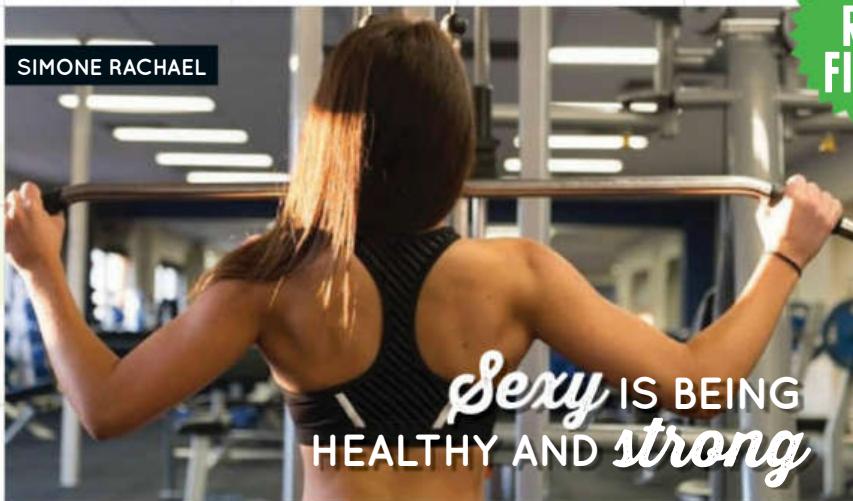
These days it's a different story, and self-acceptance is a lesson that Maston tries to pass on to clients and friends alike. "When someone comments about my body weight, yes it does upset me to a point, but it doesn't rock my world – in other words, I won't go home and start the next starvation plan. This is because I know who I am and what I stand for," she says. "Unless you know who you are and what you stand for, how can anyone else believe in you and how can you overcome any setbacks or negativity?"

"I accept I am never going to be petit or small and I would be lucky to get below a size 10 – but you know what? I am ok with that." Snap.

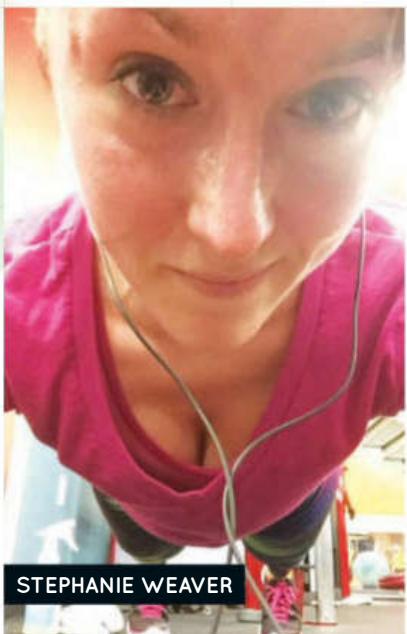


THERE IS NO
one single
PERFECT DIET.
FIND ONE THAT
WORKS
for you





Want to be part of our raw fitspo? Watch our Facebook page for callouts. (Filter free, please.)



THE ONLY PERSON YOU NEED TO COMPETE WITH IS *yourself.*



Eating healthily
DOESN'T MAKE YOU BETTER THAN EVERYONE ELSE - EYES ON YOUR OWN PLATE!

A photograph of a tropical resort. In the foreground, there's a large, clear swimming pool. In the background, several tall palm trees stand against a bright blue sky with wispy clouds. On the right side of the frame, a portion of a building is visible, featuring a white statue of a person sitting on a ledge. The overall atmosphere is serene and vacation-like.

A TIME TO SKILL

*Forget angling for an upgrade from economy to first. These inspiring healthy holidays come with bonus skill set upgrade – from surfing in Costa Rica to
omming in India.*



Learn Yoga in Thailand

KAMALAYA YOGA SYNERGY

Best for: Yogi newbies or dedicated enthusiasts looking to up their home practice

\$: From \$3,235 or \$4,040 for single occupancy (seven nights)

Save the date: On demand

Reconnect with nature and transform your mind on a luxury yoga retreat located on the southern coast of Koh Samui. Practise your back bend in your own private yoga class every day, with sessions tailored to suit your needs and goals, whether you're new to learning yoga or a keen yoga enthusiast. At the holistic spa, enjoy the Ayurveda therapies, where you'll be spoilt for choice with over 70 different treatments to choose from, including luxurious Royal Ayurvedic and vital essential oil massages. With help from expert wellness consultants and therapists, you'll feel refreshed, rejuvenated and relaxed when you return home from your healthy yoga break.



Learn to Detox in Malaysia

THE CHATEAU DETOX

Best for: Health buffs who are new to detox and in need of a cleansing tune-up

\$: From \$4,625 or \$5,440 for single occupancy (seven nights)

Save the date: On demand

Receive expert advice on improving your wellbeing while rebalancing your body with organic gourmet dishes on this healthy detox retreat in Malaysia. Following your initial nutritional and physical consultations, optimise the detoxification process by sweating out toxins during personal training sessions and a choice of group classes. Choose from fast-paced fat-burning sessions or slow things down and clear your mind with a calming yoga session. Allow your body to recover in a peaceful environment as you relax with a selection of cleansing organic spa treatments; from seaweed body wraps to lymphatic drainage and detox facials.



Learn Tennis in Antigua

CARLISLE BAY TENNIS

Best for: Active ladies looking for sporty alternatives or future tennis pros

\$: From \$5,840 or \$7,695 for single occupancy (seven nights)

Save the date: 27 April–22 August and 18 October–19 December

Ace your serve as you learn tennis from the best in the Caribbean, surrounded by tropical forests and with your own private beach just metres away. Work up a sweat at the tennis academy, where you'll be put through your paces on one of the nine tennis courts by a professional instructor. Whether you're a beginner or more advanced, make the most of six private lessons to help brush up your technique on the court. If you're looking for something completely different, why not book a helicopter ride and admire the beauty and tranquillity of this deluxe Caribbean island.





Learn a Healthy Lifestyle in the Philippines

THE FARM HEART HEALTH & STRESS REDUCTION

Best for: Wellness seekers wanting to kickstart healthier habits

\$: From \$5,490 or \$6,560 for single occupancy (seven nights)

Save the date: On demand

Surrounded by tropical plants, waterfalls and lush vegetation, experience this healing retreat hidden at the base of Mount Malarayat and learn a healthier lifestyle with the help of the outstanding support unit. From health consultations with medical doctors to fitness assessments with personal trainers, and from colon hydrotherapy sessions to acupuncture treatments, there are a host of ways this healthy holiday will help you to improve your lifestyle and re-energise your body. With eight complimentary spa treatments on offer and daily nutritional support, you'll learn everything you need from de-stressing to beating insomnia and from boosting fitness levels to eating more healthily so that you can return home a whole new person.

Learn to Surf in Costa Rica

FLORBLANCA SURFING

Best for: Surf goddesses in the making

\$: From \$4,365 or \$5,659 for single occupancy (seven nights)

Save the date: 1 May–14 December

Escape your everyday routine and secure a guaranteed beach tan when you learn to ride the tropical waves in Costa Rica at Florblanca's famed surf beaches Playa Hermosa and Playa Santa Teresa. With expert surf school instructors guiding your progress, going back to 'school' has never been so much fun. Chill out at the resort's Spa Bambu for some R&R, so you can also enjoy a luxury spa holiday while learning to surf. Whether you want to master iconic surfing manoeuvres like Hang Ten or just be able to stay standing on the board, get ready to impress by the end of this fitness holiday.

Learn How to Beat Stress in India

ANANDA STRESS MANAGEMENT

Best for: Busy bees craving to escape and shake off stress

\$: From \$3,835 or \$5,030 for single occupancy (five nights)

Save the date: 16 April–30 September

Learn to beat stress from your life once and for all at this beautiful wellness retreat hidden in the depths of the Himalayas for a wellness holiday with promised long-term solutions. Relax in the hands of the expertly trained consultants, and enjoy your access to hydrotherapy facilities and group exercise classes including yoga, pranayama and meditation to rejuvenate your mind and body throughout your health retreat. With a host of spa treatments ranging from reflexology to reiki and a grounding aroma cocoon to a rose quartz facial, this healing holiday is the perfect way to combat stress and lead a healthier lifestyle long after you've left.

Learn Pilates in Thailand

ABSOLUTE SANCTUARY PILATES REFORMER BOOTCAMP

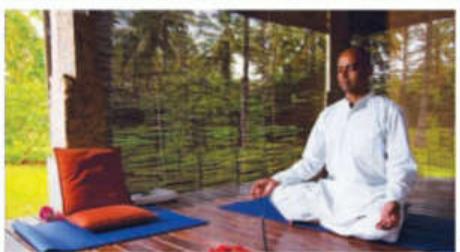
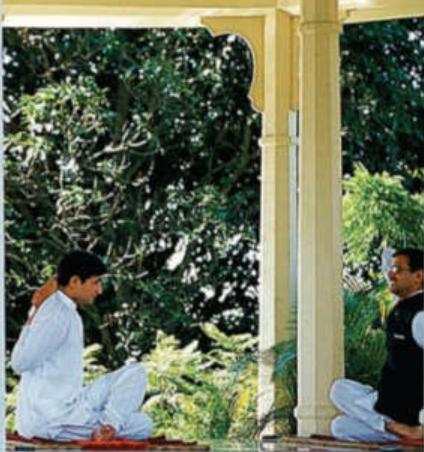
Best for: Pilates beginners or aficionados of all fitness levels

\$: From \$3,495 or \$3,925 for single occupancy (seven nights)

Save the date: 1 May–31 June and 1 November–26 December

Experience the fantastic health benefits of Pilates on a Pilates holiday in Thailand, which caters for all ages and abilities to help improve your strength and flexibility while reducing pain across your body. With a wellness consultation when you arrive and depart, discover the long-lasting benefits that come with learning Pilates while also enjoying the holiday's excellent facilities, including use of the pool, steam room and fitness studio. Work your body in group sessions and private classes while assisted by your qualified instructor and then kick back and unwind with a rejuvenation massage or Thai stretch to soothe your muscles and leave you feeling refreshed.





Learn to Meditate in India

SHREYAS SILENT RETREAT

Best for: Enlightened souls out to discover inner peace and achieve personal growth

\$: From \$4,020 or \$5,000 for single occupancy (seven nights)

Save the date: 1 April–30 September

Embark on a journey of self-discovery as you learn the stages of meditation during Shreyas Silent Retreat, set within 25 acres of India's bountiful natural beauty. This tranquil haven immerses you in the lifestyle and wisdom of Indian spiritual tradition by bringing together meditation, yoga and gourmet vegetarian 'soul food' that will cleanse the body as you cleanse your mind. Away from the distractions of everyday life, you will discover how to enhance your spiritual wellbeing. Learn meditation and return home with not only a new experience, but a newfound inspiration and inner peace that you can tap into at any time.

Learn Healthy Weight Loss in Spain

SHA WEIGHT LOSS

Best for: Life changers with the goal to lose and keep off weight

\$: From \$6,780 or \$7,655 for single occupancy (seven nights)

Save the date: On demand

Learn how to lose weight the healthy way at this pioneering wellness retreat in Spain to not only reach but to maintain your ideal weight long term. Benefit from a personalised macrobiotic diet, complete with daily natural beverages designed to boost metabolism and reduce blood sugar. Boost weight loss with personal training sessions and outdoor yoga classes before purging your body of excess fat and toxins with detoxifying spa treatments, including hydro aromatherapy and lymphatic drainage. Through a series of wellbeing lectures, expert consultations and macrobiotic cooking classes, SHA champions the importance of healthier lifestyle wellness education.



Learn to Dive in Bali

SIDDHARTHA OCEAN FRONT RESORT & SPA

Best for: Thrillseekers drawn to underwater diving adventures

\$: From \$2,375 or \$2,540 for single occupancy (seven nights)

Save the date: On demand

Host to some of the world's most diverse marine life, a diving holiday spent learning to scuba dive in Bali promises to be one you will never forget. At the Siddhartha Ocean Front Resort & Spa you will find a boutique hotel of the highest luxury and a blissful base to return to after an exhilarating dive as you relax beneath the palm trees. With 10 dives at Bali's top dive sites, as well as easy access to a convenient house reef, you will become spellbound with the world you discover beneath the ocean's surface.



Learn Stand-up Paddle Boarding in Ibiza

38 DEGREES NORTH SUP AND SOUL RETREAT

Best for: Water babies looking for fun and new ways to enjoy the waves

\$: From \$4,930 or \$5,280 for single occupancy (seven nights)

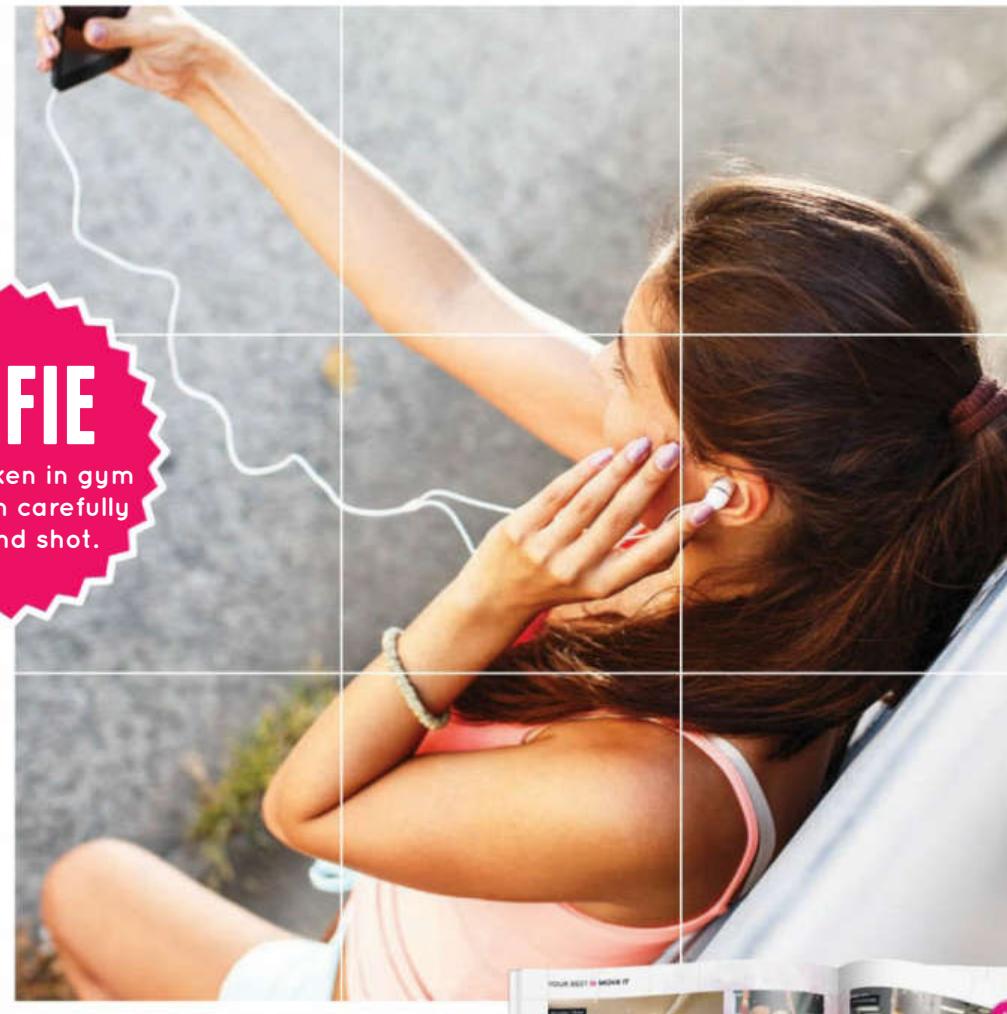
Save the date: 5 October–2 November and 15–30 April

Why waste your time sunbathing when you could tone your body and learn stand-up paddle boarding (SUP) on this luxurious, healthy beach getaway in the Balearic Islands of Ibiza. Embrace SUP for a fun, full-body workout on the water, with lessons for all abilities to help improve balance and coordination. Away from the ocean, relax your body in the holistic yoga classes, calm your mind with sunset meditation lessons or work up a sweat on an exhilarating mountain bike ride for a completely different form of adrenaline ahead of another day on the water.

We book our healthy hols through Australia's Health & Fitness Travel. To drool over infinity pools and book your next getaway, visit healthandfitnesstravel.com.au. ■

GELFIE

n. Selfie taken in gym attire; often carefully styled and shot.



CHOOSE YOUR WEAPON

TAKE A GELFIE

SEND IT TO US



#RAWFITSPO

WANT TO BE PART OF OUR RAW FITSPO?

Watch our Facebook page for callouts or send your photos to gelfies@womenshealthandfitness.com.au (Filter free, please.)

A woman with long brown hair is sitting at a light-colored wooden table, eating breakfast. She is holding a piece of toast in her right hand. On the table in front of her is a white plate containing a croissant, a scone with jam, two orange slices, and a few crackers. To the left of the plate is a white bowl filled with cereal and red dried fruit. A glass of milk is partially visible at the bottom left. The background is slightly blurred.

YOUR BEST
FUEL

A background image showing a variety of colorful macarons and scones on a wooden surface. The macarons are in shades of pink, green, yellow, and purple, some with visible fillings like cream or jam. Scones are also visible in the foreground.

LOVE at first bite: YOUR BRAIN ON YUM



The characteristics of the science of food-derived pleasure are driving new insights into cravings and so-called food addiction. A complex interplay of chemical inputs and reactions in the brain and body, hedonic eating is also affected by beliefs about eating.

Words: Stephanie Osfield

At this point, if you could look into your brain, you would see that your nucleus accumbens was all lit up. "This part of the brain is pivotal to the dopamine response and is related to pleasure, reward and craving," Morris explains. "Foods that are high in fat, sugar and salt light up the reward centres more powerfully and stimulate more dopamine release. Some people may be more vulnerable to this pleasure sensation due to genetics. Or they may require more food to generate the dopamine response because they have been on an unhealthy diet for some time."

Do you have trouble stopping after a few biscuits, wines or pieces of pizza? Dopamine could be to blame. "Certain foods flood the brain with dopamine and this barrage not only triggers intense craving, it renders cells in these regions more sensitive to future exposure to those foods," says American expert Kent Berridge, a James Olds Collegiate professor of psychology and neuroscience at the University of Michigan. This hedonistic high triggers complex chemical responses. "'Liking' mechanisms trigger hedonic circuits that connect together hotspots in the forebrain," says Berridge. Located roughly behind your eyes and above your eyebrows, they deal with emotions, memories and arousal. "'Wanting' mechanisms trigger larger networks across different areas of the brain that stimulate the release of opioids (brain chemicals causing mild euphoria). Both 'wanting' and 'liking' are powerfully triggered more by mind hunger than true stomach hunger. "Unfortunately, our modern food choices may be causing dysfunction of these reward circuits, contributing to the recent rise of obesity and eating disorders," says Berridge.

This food-feelgood connection is not happenstance. "We are hardwired and driven to desire energy-rich foods high in sugar, salt and fat because in the past they indicated good nutrition, which offered better protection in case of famine," says Associate Professor Amanda Salis, senior research fellow from Sydney University's Boden Institute of Obesity, Nutrition, Exercise and Eating Disorders. Now that those tastes are amplified in foods available 24/7, our reward circuits are being triggered more often, causing a cycle of craving for more food and more pleasure.

i

Is food as addictive as heroin? This question has been hotly debated. "In 2009, a tool called the Yale Food Addiction Survey was developed and studies using this tool suggest around 20 per cent of people could be classified as having food addiction," says Tracy Burrows, senior lecturer in nutrition and dietetics at the University of Newcastle. "But even though evidence is mounting, more research is needed and food addiction is not yet accepted as a clinical disorder."

Regardless, MRI (magnetic resonance imaging) scans can now show us our brains 'on' food. Less healthy foods (think burgers and ice cream) make the reward centres of the brain light up and sparkle. Healthy foods (think broccoli and fruit) barely rate a dull glow. This helps explains why, even after a filling dinner, you're tempted to tuck into a platter of petit fours but could easily give celery and carrot sticks a miss.

Dessert effect

If you're a chocaholic, potato chip craver or fast food fan, you might beat yourself up because you don't show more self-control. But willpower is not the whole story. "There's good evidence to show that certain types of food switch on the reward circuits of our brains to create a sensation of pleasure," says Margaret Morris, head of pharmacology in the School of Medical Sciences at the University of NSW. "These foods activate the same circuits of the brain that drive people to seek the next high from using drugs. When those reward circuits fire up, the brain releases a chemical called dopamine, involved in the sensation of pleasure."

Over time, in some people, a tolerance may develop where more junk food leads to less dopamine. "Studies show that dopamine response is blunted in many people who are overweight or obese," says Salis. "This then means that it may take up to five or 10 times the amount of chocolate or chips or other food to fire up the brain's reward centres so the person needs to eat more to experience any pleasure."

In short, now that we have supermarkets, processed foods and takeaway outlets, our hardwiring is proving a liability, increasing our risk of weight gain, obesity, diabetes, heart disease and stroke. "Just seeing an ad for a chocolate bar or burger can start a salivation process in your mouth, making you feel instantly hungrier and leading you to seek out that pleasure response even though you're not hungry," explains Rick Kausman, an expert in eating behaviour and weight and director of The Butterfly Foundation, which supports people with eating disorders and negative body image.

Brain reboot

"We don't start out in life loving French fries and hating wholewheat pasta," says Professor Susan Roberts, from the Human Nutrition Research Center of Tufts University in the US. "Our cravings for these kinds of foods are conditioned. They happen over time and are affected by food availability. Unfortunately, in our modern world, people are being influenced by a toxic food environment, which is encouraging poor choices."

“
WE DON'T START
OUT IN LIFE
LOVING FRENCH
FRIES AND HATING
WHOLE WHEAT
PASTA.
”

Reinforcing your brain's pleasure preferences by eating foods like hot dogs and lollies can then keep you locked in a cycle of choosing the wrong foods and coming back for more. And more. But once this happens, is this pattern set for life? Or is it possible for people to reboot their brains to prefer carrots over cake and a stir-fry instead of a deep-fry?

These are the questions that Roberts and her Tufts University research team set out to answer.

They studied the brain reward responses of 13 overweight and obese women and men, enrolling eight of them in a program to lose weight and retrain their eating habits and attitudes to food (the five in the control group received no training). At the beginning of the study when viewing images of unhealthy food, the brains of the participants lit up like Christmas trees on an MRI scan. The healthy fare? Barely activated the brain's reward centres. But at the study's end, it was a different story. During

MRI scanning, the images of vegetables, salads

and whole grains now fired up the cerebral pleasure centres, while unhealthy junk food, treats and snacks had far less effect, showing a decreased preference for these foods."

It augurs well for the scope of neuroplasticity to change stubborn eating behaviours according to Prof Salis. "The sample was small, so further study needs to be done, but it's a very encouraging finding," she says. "The results suggest that we can retrain our brains to prefer more nutritious food and to find them more pleasurable than less healthy choices."

HEDONIST REHAB

SAMPLE SIZE

Sure you need that jumbo serving of chocolate forest cake or fries? Studies suggest that our enjoyment of a food lessens a little with each mouthful. In research involving Stanford and Boston University, students reported significantly more enjoyment of cheese crackers when they ate only three, and experienced far less enjoyment when they ate 15 crackers. Eating a little less – even if the thought of another bite makes your reward circuitry light up like a Christmas tree – may actually make your food more enjoyable.

Retrain Your Brain:

- **Enjoy a sliver of dessert:** If you are given a full serve, leave half.
- **Go for quality:** A small meal with healthy ingredients is more satisfying than a huge feast on takeaway food, which contains cheap, less healthy or filling ingredients.
- **Serve on a smaller plate:** "Studies show that eating from a small plate encourages you to serve less food (but feel you have eaten more) and helps you feel more full after a meal," says Melanie McGrice, accredited

dietitian and director of Nutrition Plus clinics in Melbourne.

- **Weight it up:** To ensure you can assess appropriate portions of food groups like protein or carbs at a glance, spend a few weeks weighing everything you eat.



EATING EDIT

Research involving rats at the University of New South Wales shows that after two weeks on a high-fat, high-sugar diet of foods like pies and cake, rats weighed 10 per cent more and did not compensate for eating snacks by eating less at meals.

"In a similar study, rats fed a diet of highly processed foods for only 40 days quickly preferred the processed foods over healthier choices," says Salis. "They were so compulsively driven to eat the processed food that a zap of electricity did not deter them. They also had lower levels of dopamine." Many experts believe that these findings are likely to translate to eating behaviours in people. "Obese people show similar compulsive drives to eat unhealthy food and have also been found to have a reduction in the dopamine levels in their brain," Salis confirms. Ensuring you're eating adequate fibre can also curb desire to overeat. Participants in the Tufts study were encouraged to change their food choices to ensure that they were eating sufficient protein and fibre, which encourages prolonged satiety and blood sugar stability and reduces the risk of cravings for refined carbohydrates. In addition, subjects underwent associative conditioning training, which encouraged them to devalue the high-kilojoule foods they had previously craved and see the many benefits of healthy foods. This sort of cognitive restructuring encourages new brain connections to reinforce healthier eating habits as routine and normal.

Retrain Your Brain:

- **Write a weekly menu:** "Shop with specific meals in mind to take the fuss out of home cooking and reduce the risk you will get takeaway," says McGrice.
- **Brown-bag your lunch:** Include salads, wholegrain sandwiches/wraps, homemade soups or leftover portions of stew.
- **Switch to healthier 'treats':** Instead of fizzy soft drink, buy a spicy Punjabi chai tea and add a dash of low-GI maple syrup to sweeten. Instead of potato chips, enjoy homemade popcorn with a dash of sea salt. "Having less variety of unhealthy foods around your kitchen is an effective way to encourage yourself to make better choices," says Roberts.
- **Minimise Takeaway:** Repeated unhealthy fat 'hits' cause brain cells to become resistant to appetite-controlling hormones like leptin, shows research from UT Southwestern Medical Center in the US. Result? You no longer get the signal that your stomach is full. The effect lasts about three days, which is why a few fast-food feasts on the weekend may leave you feeling ravenous by Monday.

DIET SURRENDER

Try this quick test. For the next few seconds, don't think about chocolate...Tricky isn't it? This fixation is exactly what happens when you cut out any food – suddenly it's all you want to eat. People on restricted kilojoule diets experience a bigger brain response to pictures and anticipation of snack foods, shows research from the University of Oregon Research Institute in the US.

Retrain Your Brain:

- **Set a weekly kilojoule budget:** "Work out a figure, such as 2,000 kilojoules, and enjoy deciding how you will 'spend' this budget on special foods," says McGrice. "The anticipation increases food enjoyment."
- **Avoid rigid food rules:** "I encourage people to say 'I can have this food if I want it, but do I really want it?'" says Dr Kausman. "By reframing desire, that dessert or creamy pasta on the menu suddenly loses some its power and you're more likely to realise you can go without it."

Enjoy responsibly

Food is one of the great pleasures of life because it encourages us to stop, relax, treat our taste buds and socialise. Maximising that pleasure instantly boosts your enjoyment of any meal. So whenever possible:

GO SLOW

Don't eat while standing or working in front of your computer. Sit and take time over your meal. Chew each mouthful well to slow your eating pace.

STYLE YOUR FOOD

Feasting with your eyes is one of the biggest pleasures of food. So make the effort to set the table with a lovely tablecloth or candles or flowers and arrange the food on the plate with garnishes like fresh herbs. "Lovely presentation substantially enhances meal satisfaction," says McGrice.

SAVOUR WITH YOUR SENSES

Be mindful of the smell, textures and flavours of your food. Remember, attention-stealing phones and tablets are off limits.

DINE AL FRESCO

Combining nature and nourishment is the ultimate win-win.

THINK LIKE A FOOD REVIEWER

"Writing a meal review in your mind is a great way to help you take more time when eating to fully and mindfully appreciate your food," says McGrice.

SELF-PLEASURE

If your food choices repeatedly disappoint your taste buds, you're more likely to seek a pleasure hit via a treat to make up for feeling deprived.

Retrain Your Brain:

- **Choose low-GI foods:** "Foods with a lower glycaemic index (GI) of 55 or less are more slowly digested, absorbed and metabolised and cause a lower and slower rise in blood glucose and insulin levels," says McGrice. "Low-GI foods also help you feel more sated after a meal and reduce risk of weight gain and conditions like diabetes." Every day, aim to eat five serves or more of fresh vegetables and two of fruit plus wholegrains and some lean protein at every meal.
- **'Healthify' takeaway meals with homecooked makeovers:** Prepare homemade burgers with wholemeal buns and stacks of salad vegetables. Make fish and chips but grill the fish and bake large potato wedges with a dash of olive oil.
- **Downsize your utensils:** "Eating soup from a teaspoon or risotto from a small entrée fork encourages slower eating, so you feel more full and satisfied after a meal," says McGrice. Chopsticks also encourage smaller mouthfuls.
- **Mix it up:** Rigid, restrictive food regimes substantially reduce our pleasure of eating, are often nutritionally unsound and increase the risk of cravings and 'all or nothing' thinking about food. The Dietitians Association of Australia recommends aiming to eat 20 different nutritious foods every day.
- **Top 'n' tail:** Roberts calls this method the 'sandwich' technique. "You put a moderate portion of a high-kilojoule food in the middle of a meal with lower kilojoule foods that are high in fibre and protein at the beginning and end," she explains. This makes you feel you've been at a banquet. Soups make good starters and salads are a nice crispy third course.
- **Don't blow off breakfast:** Eat some filling slow-cooked porridge or eggs and dark rye toast. People who skip breakfast tend to have lower dopamine levels, shows research from the University of Missouri. This may explain why they are also more likely to crave sweet or savoury food later in the day.



Willpower-free SUGAR AMNESTY

Crave sugar constantly? Intestinal bacteria could be the cause. The human body is home to some 100 trillion different types of bacteria according to the Human Microbiome Project, conducted by America's National Institutes of Health. "Via the vagus nerve, which runs from your gut to your brain, unhealthy bacteria may send messages demanding a food component it needs to thrive – for example, sugar," says Morris. "Growing evidence suggests that this is how bacteria may influence which foods you crave." To encourage a healthier balance of belly bacteria:

– Eat and drink fermented foods. Try Greek yoghurt, kombucha tea, kimchi (Korean-style pickled vegetables) kefir (a probiotic milk drink) or sauerkraut (look for pickled cabbage with no preservatives or added sugar).

– Enjoy more vegetables: After just two days of eating an animal-based diet of meat and dairy foods including bacon, ribs and cheese, unhealthy bacteria in the belly increases, shows Harvard research. Changing to a vegetarian diet restored the good bacteria and rapidly reduced the populations of bad bacteria.

– Choose wholegrain sourdough bread: Make sure the ingredients state it has a starter culture, which is the source of the healthy bacteria. ■

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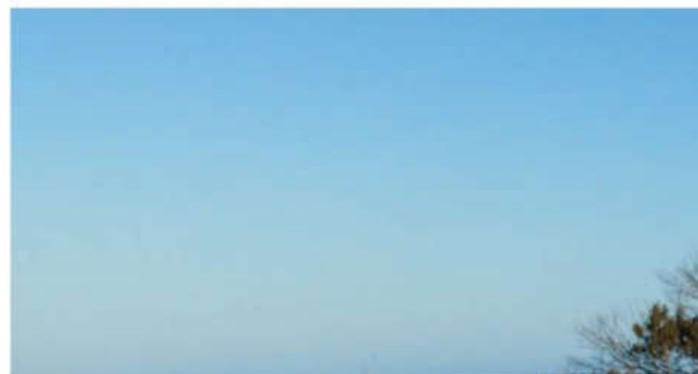


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#instaeats

They have hundreds of thousands of followers, look impossibly perfect in 5am selfies and never seem tempted by simple carbs. But behind the scenes, these cewebs have worked hard to fine-tune their bodies.

Words: Stephanie Osfield

Bloated tummies, sugar cravings, weight gain, lethargy and lack of confidence are not words that you associate with digital health influencers. But before they glowed with vitality and won huge web followings, these gorgeous health gurus struggled with body issues. Importantly, all agree that diet was integral to making over their body shape, mood and wellbeing. We convinced them to spill their transformation and maintenance secrets.



Like many women, 30-year-old fitness model Emily Skye spent years locked in a cycle of doing punishing cardio sessions, taking fat-burning supplements and obsessing about food and repetitive, rigid eating (think steamed broccoli and chicken). Every day she slaved away at the gym doing punishing sessions on cardio machines. She felt locked in a battle with her body and stressed out by the hard work of trying to stay slim. Then, about four years ago, she had an 'aha' moment when flicking through health and fitness magazines and finding the shapely but toned fitness models aspirational. She resolved to change her focus – from getting skinny to becoming more strong and healthy. Eating more nourishing food was the foundation of that huge lifestyle change. Skye started to blog about her experience and as her following grew, she skilled up to increase her fitness and personal training qualifications. Cut to the present and via her high profile website Emily Skye, she offers her F.I.T. programs, which combine workout and clean eating guides designed for women of all ages and body types.

MY FOOD PHILOSOPHY: "Don't diet – instead just make clean eating part of your lifestyle. Learn as much as you can about healthy

Don't
cut out
carbs-
choose
healthier
ones

food and find foods that you really enjoy eating so that your diet changes are easier to stick to. Keep it interesting by experimenting with different healthy recipes."

MY 'BEFORE' DIET: "I didn't eat anywhere near as much food as I should have and my choices were either super rigid – with lots of bland, steamed food or I made unhealthy choices such as junk food, takeaway and deep-fried food."

WHAT TRIGGERED MY FOOD MAKEOVER: "For years I struggled with depression and insecurities that stemmed in part from my school years where I was teased and criticised for having "big eyes", being skinny, quiet, athletic or different. Six years ago I decided I was tired of never feeling good about myself. So I set out to become more happy, healthy and fit through lifestyle changes. Within about 12 weeks of lifting weights and eating super clean (lots of vegetables and more protein), I had lost body fat and built more muscle. Over the next year, I continued to fine-tune my diet and started doing less cardio and more working out with weights. I soon felt amazing and far happier with how I looked."

THE HEALTH BENEFITS OF EATING CLEANER: "Once my diet became cleaner, I not only lost body fat and built more muscle but within days of starting to eat healthier, I had less fluid retention and less general body inflammation. I felt more positive about myself and started to appreciate everything I am rather than focussing on what I am not. My new lifestyle helped me overcome depression and insecurities, my mind became clearer, I became strong and fit and I had more energy."

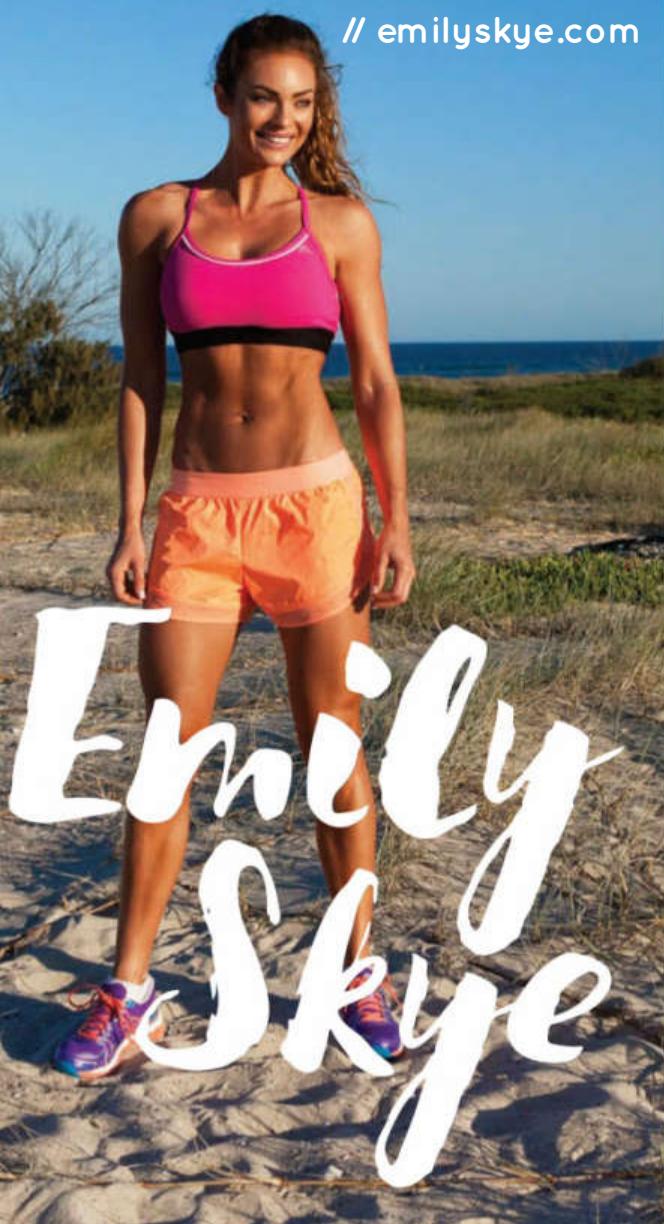
MY DIET NOW: "I don't eat sugar (except for a little natural sugar in fruits and vegetables). I barely eat any starchy carbs but I have more meat and a wider range of fresh vegetables and salads. I avoid gluten and wheat and I've cut right down on dairy products (except for natural yogurt and cottage cheese as they're lower in lactose, which I'm sensitive to). I avoid processed foods, artificial colours, flavours and preservatives. I drink a lot of pure water and I don't drink alcohol (except for special occasions – I only drink a few times a year)."

MY TRANSFORMATION TIPS:

Be prepared for withdrawal symptoms: "When changing my diet, at first I struggled with headaches, dizziness, nausea and shaking and I experienced strong cravings. It's normal to experience all of these things when you change from eating a lot of sugary foods to healthy low-sugar foods."

Make protein a priority: "Foods like animal products, nuts and beans are an important part of your diet because they are the

// emilyskye.com



Emily's day on a plate

DAY 1

BREAKFAST:

Chia pudding

LUNCH:

Smoked salmon with mixed salad of greens and vegetables

DINNER:

Spinach and mushroom frittata with carrot and kale salad

SNACK:

Yoghurt and berries

DAY 2

BREAKFAST:

Sundried tomato, mushroom, spinach and chicken quiche

LUNCH:

Moroccan chicken and zucchini noodles with avocado cream sauce

DINNER:

Chilli and lime chicken with Thai greens

SNACKS:

10 almonds and an apple

DRINKS: 2 litres of water



building blocks of body tissue and are an excellent slow-burning fuel source."

Don't cut out carbs: "When you drastically remove or reduce carbs, you end up feeling deprived, hungry and lethargic. So in my programs I really encourage people to eat complex carbs like oats, brown rice, quinoa and sweet potatoes. Remember though, not all carbohydrates are created equal – so stay away from processed carbs.

Make healthy food swaps: "Swap French fries for sweet potatoes, portobello mushrooms for burger buns, quinoa for white rice and use zucchini spaghetti or eggplant instead of pasta or lasagne sheets.

Steer clear of low-fat foods: "These usually contain a lot of salt, sugar or other additives and chemicals. Don't be afraid of eating some full-fat foods – they can be more filling and often contain less additives."

MY FAVOURITE FOOD INDULGENCE: "I love the taste of coffee – one of my favourite activities is to enjoy a coffee at a café. I drink one to two cups a day. If you're constantly depriving yourself of foods you love, you're more likely to give up a healthy eating plan. Instead I'm all for moderation. That means I have treats when I feel like it and I never make a food 'off limits' as doing this can lead to cravings. If I really want something, I enjoy it without regrets. I love healthier treats, though, as they don't upset my tummy. I often make a chia seed pudding with berries and coconut cream or coconut yoghurt. It is delicious and keeps cravings at bay. Having something to look forward to is fun and helps you stay motivated to eat well."

THE MIND-FOOD CONNECTION: "Once you eat more clean, your cravings for unhealthy foods tend to subside. Now that I've experienced how good it feels on a healthy diet, I've noticed how unwell I feel after eating foods like milk chocolate, ice cream, pizza, burgers and fries. I get extremely bloated, my tummy gets upset and

I feel lethargic. Understanding this connection makes it so much easier to realise it's not worth eating those unhealthy foods."

TRY THIS TOP TIP FROM EMILY: DON'T CUT OUT CARBS – CHOOSE HEALTHIER ONES.

Fibre is your friend and carbohydrates are the best source of this. "Because carbs are often demonised as fattening, many women don't realise how important they are for sustainable weight loss," says Melanie McGrice, dietitian and director of Melbourne's Nutrition Plus clinics. "High-fibre foods are more filling for their portion sizes and the fibre helps slow the release of carbs into the bloodstream, helping you stay full for longer. The right carbs can slow the surge in your blood sugars and insulin levels after eating. Another benefit is that foods high in fibre, such as wholegrain breads and cereals, tend to be lower in kilojoules too."

Skimping on carbs can prove a fast track to insatiable hunger. "This then makes it much harder to stick to a healthy eating plan and increases the risk that you will reach for an unhealthy snack," says McGrice. "You might also suffer lower energy levels and lower mood."

Paleo devotees may be particularly at risk of eating too little fibre, because they cut out all grains. "Short term, the reduced intake of fibre may cause constipation," says McGrice. "Long term, it can increase risks of bowel cancer, heart disease and diabetes."

Meanwhile, your initial 'weight loss' on the scales may be a bit of a mirage. "The quick weight loss most people enjoy in the first week or two of a diet occurs because they burn off their stores of carbohydrates (also called glycogen)," says McGrice. "For every one gram of glycogen you burn you also lose three grams of water, which is why it is so easy to lose a little weight when you first restrict kilojoules. But what you initially lose is fluid, so if you return to eating more carbohydrates, you will regain that fluid and regain weight on the scales."

As a dynamic health and fitness model, 34-year-old Bianca Cheah glows with vitality. By her 20s she realised that being healthy and active was one of her biggest passions in life, so it seemed only natural to launch a website and blog that inspired other people to become healthier too. As the founder and creative director of the popular Sporteluxe (sporteluxe.com), the down-to-earth yoga instructor and high-profile lifestyle influencer shares information and advice for women interested in maximum health, beauty, stylish living and wellbeing. Cheah's passion about health and fitness was kickstarted by her own mother (a model and owner of health cafes and restaurants) and father (a master in taekwondo). Her dazzling, dark exotic looks also indicate her dad's Chinese Malay heritage and her mum's Irish/Danish background. Her wellness philosophy and tips have inspired women all over the world to make changes to become more radiant, nourished, empowered, happy and energised. Cheah's website now has a large and growing online community and features blogs from top health and fitness experts, as well as Cheah's highly respected lifestyle advice.

MY FOOD PHILOSOPHY: "Eat clean and lean and have everything in moderation."

MY DIET 'BEFORE': "I grew up in a household where we ate plenty of fresh produce and my dad brought taekwondo to Australia, so I was raised to be active and healthy. This meant from an early age I was committed to eating nourishing foods. But though I should have felt like I was brimming with good health, in my 20s I still suffered health issues without realising that a sensitivity to lactose in dairy foods was the problem."

WHAT TRIGGERED MY FOOD MAKEOVER: "Eight years ago, through a process of elimination (cutting out different foods), I realised that dairy foods had long been upsetting my digestive system. Until that realisation that I was lactose intolerant, it was incredibly frustrating. Though I had a super-healthy diet, my tummy was often in great discomfort and I sometimes became very bloated, so I often had to dress to hide the bump. Once I came off diary foods, I started to feel much better within a week and now my digestion is much, much healthier. It was hard to give up foods like yoghurt, but it's been worth it because I now enjoy far better health."

MY DIET NOW: "I eat a high-protein, low-carb diet. I don't eat dairy foods like milk, cheese and yoghurt. Chicken and fish

Eat more Vegetables

are my top protein picks and with them I always eat plenty of fresh vegetables – particularly the veggies in season as they are grown more naturally. I love to buy them at local growers' markets. Instead of cow's milk I stick to lactose-free, almond or soy milk. I have never liked the taste of green vegetables but in the last few years I've found a way to have them through green juices. Now I can drink down foods like broccoli, broccolini, spinach and cucumber and I feel good knowing I've nourished my body with a huge vitamin boost."

OVER TIME I HAVE CONTINUED TO TWEAK MY DIET TO MAKE IT HEALTHIER AND HEALTHIER. THAT MEANS I:

- » **Have very little sugar** – I use honey instead because it contains more nutrients.
- » **Minimise my intake of carbs** – they make me feel bloated and lethargic.
- » **Avoid processed foods** – they really do give me a feeling that is like a hangover.



Bianca Cheah

Founder of // sporteluxe.com // biancacheah.com.au



- » **Become vigilant** about avoiding preservatives, colours and additives.
- » **Eat more lean protein**, which is critical when you're working out because protein makes your muscles grow.
- » **Eat lots of fresh food**: The more fresh the meal, the better I feel.
- » **Enjoy a variety of vegetables**, which are on high rotation in my diet.

THE HEALTH BENEFITS OF EATING CLEANER: "Diet is a very powerful way to boost your health and you can see the results really quickly, so it is also very motivating. If I'm modelling for a shoot, particularly a fitness/swim campaign, I like to prep my body in the lead-up by cutting down on sugars and salt, and any white-looking foods like potatoes, white rice and pasta. I'll only eat carbs like quinoa, brown rice and sweet potato. At the same time, I do more toning workouts."

MY TRANSFORMATION TIPS:

- # **Pack lunches and snacks:** This ensures that you have something healthy on hand and have full control over what's in your food – so that you're not consuming too much salt or sugar or unhealthy fats.
- # **Write a meal plan:** Stick to your shopping list so you don't bring home unhealthy foods. Having the ingredients for all your meals on hand reduces the temptation to get take-away.
- # **Eat foods as fresh as possible:** Go for good-quality organic meat, wild unfarmed fish and fresh fruit and vegetables. Shop more regularly to ensure you are cooking with fresh ingredients – not limp carrots or soggy tomatoes.
- # **Watch for hidden sugars:** Don't overdo your fruit intake and be mindful that some foods that seem like health foods may not

be great choices – for example, dried fruits are high in natural sugars and often contain preservatives that can upset sensitive digestive systems.

- # **Ensure food is flavoursome:** If you eat bland food, you will feel miserable and you're more likely to abandon your clean eating. So use fresh spices and flavours and ingredients such as lemon juice on salads.
- # **Watch what you drink:** Avoid fruit juices and fizzy soft drinks, which are just packed with sugars. And have wine a couple of times a week, but not every night.

MY FAVOURITE INDULGENCE: "I believe it's really important to allow yourself treats in moderation. Otherwise abstaining can lead to binge eating. The right treats can also bring health benefits. I like to snack on chocolate-covered goji berries, which are full of antioxidants. Occasionally, I enjoy a Caramello Koala. It's just the right size – not too little or too much. After a long workday, I also like to occasionally unwind over a glass of bio-dynamic and organic red wine. I also love spaghetti bolognese but instead of having it with pasta, I make the mince and pour it over steamed broccolini. That way I get the taste but without the heavy feeling that carbs give me."

THE MIND-FOOD CONNECTION: Food is something you should enjoy, not something you should fear or wrestle with. To enjoy it more fully, really focus on your food so that you eat mindfully. I always eat until I'm comfortably satisfied – just like the Okinawans in Japan. Many of them live to be 100 or older and they have a saying that you should eat until you are 80 per cent full."

TRY THIS TIP FROM BIANCA: EAT MORE VEGETABLES

"**There are undeniable health benefits to eating more vegetables,**" says McGrice. "People on a vegetarian diet not

only meet and often exceed the recommended daily intake of vegetables, but in the process they consume many vitamins and minerals, which can help prevent conditions like diabetes and diseases like cancer."

Vegetarian and vegan diets are lower in saturated fat, so they reduce the risk of heart disease. "In addition, vegetarians often eat whole grains, nuts and good oils, which are all beneficial for healthy cholesterol levels," McGrice says. "A vegetarian diet is lower in fat and higher in fibre, and this combination helps people feel more full, so it is beneficial for weight loss and maintaining a healthy weight. Vegetables also contain a wide range of healthy phytonutrients which can help boost immunity, increase healthy fibre intake and help you feel full and more satisfied so that you snack less between meals."

The benefits don't stop there. "Whether you enjoy your veggies in snacks or meals, high-fibre foods such as carrots and celery break down more slowly in your digestive system, providing lasting energy," says McGrice. "They also force you to chew more, which can help stimulate the hormones that control your appetite. Your brain and belly then send signals between each other to let you know that you are full and don't need any more food. Their low calorie count also means you can eat veggies in abundance without gaining weight."

Bianca's day on a plate

DAY 1

BREAKFAST:

Green juice of spinach, lemon, cucumber, celery (no apple) and a chia pod

MID-MORNING:

Soy latte

LUNCH:

Tuna or chicken salad: purple onion, lettuce, cucumber, grape tomatoes, boiled eggs

A squeeze of lemon over the top for dressing

DINNER:

Grilled fish, chicken or steak served with vegetables e.g. broccolini, squash, carrots and snow peas

SNACK:

A handful of almonds or macadamia nuts



DRINKS: 2 litres of water and a small glass of coconut water

DAY 2:

BREAKFAST:

Green juice of spinach, lemon, cucumber, celery (no apples) and a chia pod

MID MORNING:

A soy latte

LUNCH:

Homemade soup with lots of vegetables

DINNER:

A lean piece of grilled steak served with broccolini, Brussels sprouts, homemade Napoli sauce

SNACK:

Instead of a sweet snack I enjoy a cup of English breakfast tea with honey

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Although she's stunning from top to toe, Guidolin, 26, is not afraid to talk about gaining 30 kilos and suffering exhaustion and cravings en route to the motherhood she's since embraced. Feeling lost and unhappy, she started an exercise routine that combined weight training and cardio. Though she enjoyed improvements and weight loss, she still did not get the results she was hoping for. The big transition came when she changed to a diet of clean food. She had expected to feel hungry and deprived. Instead, she felt incredibly healthy.

Within three weeks, weight she had gained started to melt away. Within six weeks, her family and friends were commenting. By 12 weeks, the weight loss and toning had completely reshaped her body and acquaintances were commenting too. Wanting to share her lifestyle secrets with others, the ravishing fitness model and personal trainer launched her Eat Clean Live Clean website and blog. It rapidly gained a huge online following and now offers advice on everything from weight loss and muscle definition to post baby shape-up and pre-wedding transformations. A mum to two boys and baby twin girls, Guidolin is a sought-after fitness model and guru who has coached thousands of women to reach their goals of losing weight or attaining a different body shape. On her site she offers popular workout guides and two e-books, *Eat Clean, Live Lean* and *My Kids Eat*, which provide further take-home advice.

Eat more lean Protein

MY FOOD PHILOSOPHY: "Eat foods as close to their natural form and state. Don't drink your kilojoules; where possible, drink water."

MY DIET 'BEFORE': "Growing up on a farm, we ate a very clean diet, grew vegetables and fruits and didn't eat dairy products. But once I moved out of home and could make my own choices, I let my sweet tooth loose and I ate a lot of high-fat, high-sugar foods and dairy as well. Back then, on a typical day, my food intake was loaded with carbs and sugars and processed foods. It looked something like this:

Breakfast: Sugar-loaded cereal and chocolate milk

Morning tea: Crumpets or croissant with Nutella

Lunch: 2-minute noodles

Afternoon tea: Milo and a bikkie

Dinner: Lasagne, pasta, chicken schnitzel, burgers or takeaway

Dessert: Ice cream"

WHAT TRIGGERED MY FOOD MAKEOVER:

"During and after my pregnancy with my first son, I gained

28 kilos, developed gestational diabetes and had to monitor my food intake very carefully. Shortly after this I became pregnant with my second son and had another pregnancy with extreme weight gain. I was really unhappy about my body and I had no energy or strength. My approach to food radically shifted when I started to introduce solids into the diet of my children. I would never have dreamt of giving them what I was eating so I made all their food from scratch. I wanted to be a good role model for them and that's what started my own journey of researching a healthy lifestyle and embracing it. Within six weeks of making diet changes – even as simple as just drinking water – I could see and feel a huge difference. My skin became far clearer and my energy levels radically improved."

My diet now: "I overhauled most of my habits, which meant I:

- » Cut back on sugar
- » Reduced my intake of carbs
- » Started avoiding processed foods
- » Changed food choices to reduce my intake of preservatives, colours and additives
- » Started eating more lean protein
- » Reduced my intake of dairy foods
- » Ate more fresh food
- » Ate fresh vegetables and a bigger variety of vegetables."

THE HEALTH BENEFITS OF EATING CLEANER: "When I started changing my lifestyle, I not only slimmed down but within two months my skin was clearer and I felt I had a new lease on life."

MY TRANSFORMATION TIPS:

Stop drinking kilojoules: "I used to live off energy drinks. Though I was never a big coffee drinker, I downed two to four energy drinks a day. This was almost my entire daily kilojoule amount in those drinks alone. Along with that I sometimes drank cordial, soft drinks and milk. Cutting them out instantly reduced my

intake of kilojoules and sugar. Water is the healthiest drink."

Eat protein at every meal.

"In the past, I didn't eat enough protein. With my diet changes, I started adding protein to every meal. As well as helping me build muscle, this also boosted my energy levels and the iron in the meat helped with the anaemia I had developed."

Adapt recipes:

"When I changed my diet, I soon started experimenting in the kitchen with 'clean' foods and created my own recipes for many different varieties of foods such as protein brownies, quinoa pancakes, low-carb cakes and chicken and couscous. Eating a variety of different meals made me enjoy my food more and ensured I had a much wider range of healthy vitamins and minerals."

Roll out changes over time:

"I didn't go cold turkey or change everything all at once. I made slow, constant changes to my diet, such as

cutting out the soft drinks. Going slow really helped me stick to the changes and turn them into habits. Now I would never dream of drinking or eating the unhealthy foods I used to have every day."

MY FAVOURITE INDULGENCE:

"Chocolate! I strongly believe that everything is fine in moderation. I don't want my children to grow up thinking that if they eat certain foods they will be in trouble, but I do want them to know that by making better choices they can enjoy better health, have more energy (for exercise) and ensure their body is working the best it can. I think that restriction with food eventually turns the food into something 'forbidden', which makes you desire it more."

THE MIND-FOOD CONNECTION:

"When retraining your eating habits, learn to listen to your body so you recognise how you feel when you eat certain foods. Having a healthy relationship with food means not thinking of foods as

'good' or 'bad'. It is more helpful to think of whether the food you are choosing will fill you and energise you and what health benefits it will bring. Then you are more likely to eat satisfying meals so you don't binge or slip into a downward spiral of poor choices."

TRY THIS TOP TIP

FROM SOPHIE: EAT MORE LEAN PROTEIN.

"Of the major macronutrients, such as carbohydrates and fats, protein rates higher on the satiety scale, which means it makes people feel fuller for longer after a meal," says McGrice. Ensuring a good mix of different protein sources is a healthy and satisfying way to boost your nutrient intake. "Animal proteins such as fish, lean red meat, lamb or beef, skinless chicken breast, eggs and dairy foods are considered complete because they contain all of the essential amino acids," McGrice explains. "Plant proteins like legumes don't contain all the amino acids, but these can be consumed over the course of the day."

A growing number of studies suggest that we are actually hard-wired to eat protein. According to the 'protein leverage theory', our bodies demand we eat a certain level of protein every day and if we don't hit that target, we are driven to keep eating until we reach a certain level of protein. This means that if we consume a diet with a low protein content, we will eat more than we need in order to ensure we have had enough protein.

The golden rule when increasing protein – eating from all food groups is still crucial. "If you do increase your protein intake, make sure you don't do it at the expense of fruit and vegetables, as they are also pivotal to good health and weight control," McGrice cautions. "And don't eat excess red meat. Studies show that a higher intake of foods like bacon and red meat can increase the risk of bowel cancer." ■

Sophie's day on a plate

DAY 1

BREAKFAST:

Omelette with veggies

LUNCH:

Chicken and salad with greens and vegetables

DINNER:

Stir fry with vegetables and beef/chicken or roasted eggplant lasagne

SNACKS:

Nuts, fruit or carrots and hummus

DESSERT:

Fruit or protein balls

DAY 2

BREAKFAST:

Smoothie with peanut butter, almond milk, honey, oats

LUNCH:

Frittata with eggs and vegetables

DINNER:

Lentil curry or soup or slow-cooked stew with vegetables like carrots, zucchini and celery

SNACKS:

Rice cakes with honey

DESSERT:

Fruit

DAILY DRINKS: 2 litres of water

YOUR BEST >> FUEL IT



PHOTOGRAPH: THINKSTOCK

The PERFECT DIET

For all its gains identifying foods that avert disease, stabilise mood, boost longevity, make the body run smoothly and keep weight in the black, science can't yet account for personal nuance. The best you can do is take a template approximating perfection and tweak to find your personal groove. Eat. Evaluate. Tweak.

Words: David Goding

The perfect diet doesn't exist. That is, there is not one diet that is going to be the perfect option for all people. One woman's Paleo is another's nightmare. 5:2 might be the answer for some, but in the real world 7:0 is always going to be more workable.

"We mentally categorise someone as a 'fussy' eater, or a 'calorie-obsessed' eater or an 'I can give him anything and he'll eat it' kind of eater," says Karen Knowler, author of *Eat Right for your Personality Type*. "But dig a little deeper and you'll find that you, just like everyone else, have an eating 'personality' comprised of one or more eater types, and this personality dictates everything that you think, feel and do around food."

"There is no 'ideal type' for you to be – no right or wrong."

Perfection, then, is difficult, to say the least, but still definitely worth striving for. Get close to perfection and you'll be getting close to getting the best out of your body and mind and maximising your almost-full potential. Most diets will tell you that close enough isn't good enough, but in reality this is the ultimate.

Paul Jaminet, with wife Shou-Ching, both from Harvard, spent five years researching the best diets, and after much borrowing, tweaking and eating, published their findings in *Perfect Health Diet*.

"Most people's diets are deficient in some nutrients, provide an excess of others, and are rich in toxins," says Jaminet. "These dietary errors cause ill health."

"Most of the chronic and degenerative diseases that afflict modern society cannot be cured until the diet is fixed. Much of what

people consider 'ageing' is, in fact, infectious disease aggravated by a bad diet."

To attempt perfection you need to keep it simple, which, in an age of abundance, isn't as simple as it sounds.

Michael Pollan comes close with his famous line from *In Defence of Food*: "Eat food. Not too much. Mostly plants."

"That, more or less, is the short answer to the supposedly incredibly complicated and confusing question of what we humans should eat in order to be maximally healthy," he says.

"Eating a little meat isn't going to kill you, though it might be better approached as a side dish rather than as a main. And you're better off eating whole fresh foods rather than processed food products. That's what I mean by the recommendation to 'eat food', which is not quite as simple as it sounds. For a while it used to be that food was all you could eat, today there are thousands of other edible foodlike substances in the supermarket. These novel products of food science often come in packages elaborately festooned with health claims."

But a food claim on a food product, says Pollan, "is a strong indication it's not really food, and food is what you want to eat."

The quest for a simple answer to the perfect diet is complicated by an overcomplicated food kingdom, the myriad of interactions it has with our body, changes in our activity levels and other things you can't control, such as hormone shifts, glucose demands during specific tasks as well as your fickle emotional state.

Despite all this, we think we may have found the perfect diet.

The big three

Nothing has caused so much debate and controversy (and sold more books) as the big three macronutrients – protein, carbs and

fats; or more specifically, how much of each we should be getting in our 'perfect diet'. Despite all the fear-mongering, the three get along well, interact happily on a daily basis, and don't celebrate the others' failings.

Both carbs and fats have been undeservingly derided for decades, but under closer inspection aren't nearly as evil as they first appear. The real culprits – for each – are almost certainly refined carbs/sugars and trans fats. Getting the three macros in the best ratios has also been a matter of hot debate.

"The perfect health diet is, by calories, a low-to-moderate carbohydrate (20 to 35 per cent), high-fat (50 to 65 per cent), moderate-protein (15 per cent) diet," says Jaminet. "However, by weight, the diet is about 65 per cent plant foods, 35 per cent meats and oils."

"Eat about 450 grams per day – roughly, four fist-sized servings – of 'safe starches': rice, potatoes, taro, winter squashes, and a few others. Add up to another 450 grams of sugary plants, fruits, berries, beets, carrots and such, and as many low-calorie vegetables as you like."

"Eat at least 225 grams of fatty meats, seafood and eggs. Once a week, eat salmon or other coldwater fish for omega-3 fatty acids."

And don't forget the fats. Jaminet recommends six to 12 teaspoons of healthy cooking oils and fats per day – enough to make your food delicious but not oily. "Butter, sour cream, beef tallow, duck fat, coconut oil, olive oil, and tree nut butters are the best fats."

Aim for quality rather than quantity. Spend more on quality produce and you're also more likely to eat less.



Portion control

Smaller portions aren't always better. When it comes to nutrient-dense foods, many of us don't eat enough. It is possible to get all the vitamins and minerals you need with diet alone. Unfortunately many of us don't. Often those on a poor diet think they get enough nutrients and have no need of supplements (they do), whereas those on a balanced healthy diet, because they're more health conscious, are more likely to invest in an assortment of nutritional supplements that they don't need. Go figure.

"Eat a rainbow a day," recommends Dr Cris Beer, a medical practitioner and author of *Healthy Habits*. "Simply eating the same piece of fruit each day and just lettuce on our sandwich does not cut it. Ideally we need to aim to eat a rainbow a day of coloured fruits and vegetables. That is, we need to consume all seven colours of the fruit and vegetable every day to receive the protection we need from chronic diseases."

"This is because fruits and vegetables are coloured differently due to the presence of different phytonutrients, which are powerful antioxidants."

Orange fruits and veggies contain carotenoids (which are in turn converted to vitamin A), red foods contain lycopene, yellow foods and citrus contain vitamin C and bioflavonoids, purple and blue foods contain anthocyanins, green foods contain chlorophyll and indoles, and white fruits and veggies contain allicin and/or potassium. Get them all every day and you're well on the way to a perfect diet.

Satisfaction factor

You can have the healthiest diet in the world but it's highly unlikely you're going to stick with it if it's not satisfying. That's where going low GI comes in. Carbs judged to have a low glycaemic index release sugars slowly, keeping you fuller for longer and keeping those nasty sugar spikes in check.

But aren't starchy foods fattening?

"Wrong – starchy foods are often bulky and nutritious," says Jennie Brand-Miller, professor of nutrition at the University of Sydney (where she is often referred to as GI Jennie) and co-author of *The Low GI Handbook*. "They fill you up and stave off hunger pangs – which means they can actually help with, rather than hinder, weight loss. The key, as with all foods, is to be choosy about the kinds of starchy foods you're eating."

A low-GI diet contains wholegrain bread, oats, barley, couscous, cracked wheat, legumes, such as kidney beans and lentils, and all types of fruits and vegetables. High-GI foods to be avoided – unless you're working out intensively – include white bread, white rice, potatoes and virtually every packaged snack food you can imagine.

Stick with a low-GI diet and you can consume a higher ratio of carbs to protein and fat. Contrary to Jaminet's recipe for a perfect diet, Brand-Miller recommends a carb intake of 45 to 65 per cent of energy, fat 25 to 35 per cent and protein 15 to 35 per cent, in line with the US National Institutes of Health guidelines.

"If your preference is for more protein or more fat and fewer carbs, then go ahead – just be choosy about the quality," she says.

Brain food

Get smart and eat breakfast. Studies have found that both children and adults who eat breakfast perform better cognitively than those who don't have breakfast at all. It

has also been found that when children who didn't eat breakfast at all started eating breakfast, their marks went up dramatically.

Best of all is a breakfast that consists of carbohydrates, fibre and protein, such as beans or cheese on toast. Yeast spreads, such as Vegemite or Promite, loaded with B vitamins, also offer brain-boosting benefits.

A healthy brain has high levels of omega-3 fatty acid, in particular DHA, which makes up around 50 per cent of brain tissue. DHA is essential for healthy brain development and for relaying signals between brain cells.

Fish – especially oily fish, such as salmon, mackerel, tuna, trout and sardines – is loaded with omega-3s and is the best brain food you can include in your diet.

A low dietary intake of omega-3 fats have been linked to learning difficulties, behavioural problems and even mental illness.

Weight gains

You'd think that the perfect diet would be all about packing in as much nutrients as possible without all the filler. Stock up on a pantry full of super-supplements and you've got all bases covered. But for some reason it doesn't work this way.

"Nutrients are no substitute for food – edible plants and animals," says Jaminet. "Plenty of evidence supports this position. For example, laboratory mice and rats are fed either 'chow', which consists of seeds, grains, beans, and alfalfa – foods similar to what rodents eat in the wild – or a 'purified-nutrient diet'. Purified-nutrient diets are protein, starch and sugar, fibre, fat, vitamins and minerals. Nothing more. They are missing a host of biological compounds found in plants and animals."

"Rodents that eat purified-nutrient diets are usually in worse health than rodents that eat chow. Often, purified-nutrient diets make rodents fat."

But what does all this rodent talk have to do with us? Plenty, as it turns out.

"When humans want to lose weight, they often start eating meal replacement bars and weight-loss shakes composed of purified nutrients – the very kind of diet that makes rodents fat."

The secret to weight management: get back to basics and prepare the food yourself, from scratch.

"It may be no coincidence that the obesity epidemic began around 1970, the time when packaged foods became a large part of our diet."

Eating upskill

The French eat constantly, with far greater regularity than Australians or Americans. Yet they don't pack it on like we do. It's not genetics, it's portion sizes. While Australians might scoff down a big bowl of pasta in 10 minutes flat, the French will stretch out mealtime, often with several courses and a couple of glasses of wine. But the portion sizes will be small, with the emphasis on quality rather than on how much they can fit on the plate.

"'Eat less' is the most unwelcome advice of all, but in fact the scientific case for eating a lot less than we presently do is compelling, whether or not you are overweight," says Pollan. "Calorie restriction has repeatedly been shown to slow ageing and prolong lifespan in animals, and some researchers believe it is the single strongest link between a change in the diet and the prevention of cancer."



RULES of EATING

from Michael Pollan, author
of *In Defence of Food*

Don't eat anything your great grandmother
wouldn't recognise as food.

Avoid food products that make health claims

Eat mostly plants, especially leaves.

Regard non-traditional foods with scepticism.

Pay more. Eat less.

Don't get your food from the same place
your car does.

Eat slowly.

"Put simply: Overeating promotes cell division, and promotes it most dramatically in cancer cells; cutting back on calories slows cell division. It also stifles the production of free radicals, curbs inflammation, and reduces the risk of most of the Western diseases."

So aim for quality rather than quantity. Spend more on quality produce and you're also more likely to eat less. And savour the experience by eating mindfully. Like the French.

"Remaining in the present allows you to relax, mentally and physically, and stop the reactive cycle that leads to overeating (or choosing high-sugar or high-fat foods)," says Ruth Wolever, clinical health psychologist and co-author of *The Mindful Diet*.

"Being present also keeps you in touch with what's happening in your body – notably, signals of hunger and fullness that are very easy to ignore when your mind is going a mile a minute." ■

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There's no time like racing season to explore new bread incarnations answering every dietary nuance – including low-carb.

Slice is Right



With the Paleo collective eschewing grains, fitness junkies ousting all but the most complex of carbs and half the world practising gluten-free eating, bread has become the pariah of the food world. More than 40 per cent of women aged 25 to 65 avoid eating bread while trying to lose weight according to a national study. Pureprofile research commissioned by Bakers Delight found that 20 per cent of the 83 per cent of Australians who still eat bread an average five times a week suffer post-meal guilt.

Like many diet movements, the broad gist of low-carb as synonymous with weight loss has taken hold without most adopters questioning the science. In fact, fear of bread results from collective misinterpretation of nutrition science according to *WH&F* nutritionist Lucinda Zammit (lucindazammit.com.au). Recent attention to the role of protein intake in sustainable weight loss has set the scene for further carb-phobia despite there being no relationship between the merits of high-protein eating and the nutritional

merits of carbs. That's confirmation bias in action. What's more, low-carb fantacism often ignores vast differences between the physiological impact of complex carbs, simple carbs and resistant starch. It also ignores the fact that accompaniments served with carbs can reduce the glycaemic index, altering the way they affect the body. Fibre and protein are cases in point.

"Unfortunately, this lowering or cutting of carbs has extended to all types of breads, not just the nasty, refined kind," Zammit says. While white and multigrain breads that are really just white bread with some grains thrown in offer little nutritional value and indeed catapult insulin, promoting fat storage and sugar cravings, other breads are a dieter's best friend. High-fibre, wholegrain bread, for instance, promotes prolonged satiety because its glucose is absorbed slowly, keeping blood sugar balanced. As a rule, the greater the fibre content, the stronger the brake on glucose release and the better the bread is for weight loss, reducing risk factors for metabolic syndrome and making it a helluva lot easier to resist the 4pm doughnut.

Wholesale aversion to gluten has fostered similarly mimetic myths, which have spread without challenge. In fact, for people without coeliac disease or gluten or wheat sensitivity, there is no advantage to eating gluten-free bread rather than standard wholemeal bread.

Filling time

A sandwich's filling is integral to whether bread helps or hinders weight loss. While high-fibre, nutrient-dense vegetables promote further satiety, low-nutrient, energy-dense spreads like mayonnaise can contribute more kilojoules than a chunky piece of bread with no satiety value. Spreads high in sugar, including certain sauces and mayos, are particularly deleterious. Café sandwiches often disguise layers of butter and mayo, potentially adding a meal's worth of kJs and saturated fat to an otherwise balanced lunch.

"Foods can be combined in a meal to bring the overall GI down. You should try to put meals together based on low-GI foods, but if you do choose bread higher in GI, adding protein or fat will lower the overall GI of a meal," Zammit says. Vegetables, fruits, lean protein and healthy fats (think avocado or a scrape of unsaturated spread) make ideal fillings.

Words/counsel: Lucinda Zammit (lucindazammit.com.au)

WHOLEMEAL

This variety of bread is made with wholemeal flour or refined whole grains.

What they say: Just like wholegrain bread with all the fibre benefits.

What our expert says: Fibre helps to keep you regular and fill you up, but be wary – this can be white bread in disguise! When buying this type of bread, make sure the fibre content is higher than your white bread variety.

Caveat emptor: Watch that your wholemeal bread is not a mix of wholemeal and highly refined white flour, which would undermine the point of choosing wholemeal bread. Be aware that ground grains don't have the same benefits as whole grains.

Per 2 slice serve (avg 84g):
790kJ 33.6g carb // 8.1g protein // 4.3g fibre

HIGH PROTEIN, LOW CARB

Made with a variety of ingredients that up the protein – nuts, seeds and even whey protein.

What they say: Perfect for those looking to lose weight, fight obesity and combat type II diabetes. It also puts sambos back on the menu for those on an anti-grain Paleo diet or low-carb meal plan.

What our expert says: No more roll-in-a-bowl (a.k.a. pile of lettuce).

What to look for: Natural ingredients

Caveat emptor: Anything you cannot pronounce, avoid.

Per 2 slice serve (avg 74g): 500kJ
2.4g carb // 6.4g protein // 4.8g fibre

GLUTEN FREE

Stock-standard bread with the gluten removed.

What they say: Perfect for those with gluten intolerance or coeliac disease.

What our expert says: Coeliacs and the gluten sensitive can again enjoy toast with their eggs in the morning. But if you're not intolerant or sensitive, you're just as well off with regular bread. Some gluten-free products use fillers to compensate for missing gluten. Regardless, when buying gluten-free loaves, seek out whole grains and check the sugar content, which can be high.

Caveat emptor: Steer clear of white bread (just because it's gluten-free, doesn't mean it's less troublesome), high

sugar, high sodium and ingredients you can't pronounce.

Tip: Keep it in the freezer and eat it toasted for the best flavour.

Per 2 slice serve (avg 78g): 866kJ
32.1g carb // 4.9g protein // 2.5g fibre

MULTIGRAIN

Multigrain bread includes the entire grain – no milling.

What they say: High in fibre, vitamins, minerals and goodness, true multigrain bread can keep you full, ward off cravings and keep your digestive system humming.

What our expert says: This is your best of the everyday options. It has a lower GI than white or wholemeal bread and will keep you fuller for longer.

What to look for: Look for a minimum of 51 per cent whole grains. Make sure you can see the grains in the slices! You want one with 100 per cent whole grain.

Caveat emptor: Beware anything high in sugar. It could be white bread masquerading.

Per 2 slice serve (avg 85g): 880kJ
37.8g carb // 7.3g protein // 3.4g fibre

SPROUTED

Bread embedded with wholegrain kernels that have been sprouted and ground.

What they say: Sprouted grains have a higher nutrient content and are easier to digest than their unsprouted counterparts while also boasting higher protein than standard bread peers.

What our expert says: Sprouted breads are gentler on the digestive system and their nutrients are easier to absorb. For blood sugar stabilising, sprouted bread is a good choice.

What to look for: Price. Sprouted breads parade in the gourmet, artisan category, so make sure your investment is valuable. If you love the taste or the way it makes you feel, go ahead.

Caveat emptor: Due to its freshness and low sugar, this bread has a short shelf life. If you take more than a couple of days to get through a loaf, when you get it home, slice and freeze in bags of two slices ready for toast or a sandwich.

Per 2 slice serve (avg 82g): 763kJ
23.7g carb // 12.3g protein // 7g fibre

BOULANGERIE PATISSERIE

FORTIFIED

Breads with added ingredients to provide added health benefits.

What they say: More nutritionally dense than regular breads, with certain fortifications able to benefit people with special needs – think varieties packed with omega-3, iron or calcium.

What our expert says: These breads try to encourage people to choose them to bump up certain dietary components, yet a nutrient that has been isolated and added to a foreign food will be inferior and perhaps less bioavailable.

What to look for: No fancy bread is going to compensate for an imbalanced diet. Don't be lulled into a false sense of security by chowing down on bread with extra omega-3;

there's a lot of other goodness in an omega-3 source such as salmon. Likewise calcium, which is better addressed with Greek yoghurt than bread.

Caveat emptor: Flashy claims can distract from other more important considerations you might otherwise make. If you do want fortification, make sure you still evaluate products on their sodium, sugar and fibre; a fortified bread can still be high GI.

Per 2 slice serve (avg 82g): 795kJ
33.1g carb // 6.2g protein // 6.8g fibre

ANTI-BLOAT SAMBOS

We can't do much about the distending effect of bubbles, but the right filling choices can guard against gassy bloating. Cabbage, cauliflower and onions are on notice, as are 'diet' spreads containing artificial sweeteners that can produce excess gas. If wheat inflates your middle, try 100 per cent rye bread, which tends to be better tolerated, Landau says.

PITA/WRAPS

Used for wraps, healthy fajitas and other cold and hot sandwiches and meals that call for a thin slice of bread.

What they say: Can be a better option than sandwich bread due to decreased serving size.

What our expert says: While wraps are often recommended for reducing carbs and/or calories in the diet, a single flat wrap can pack in more calories than two pieces of some bread varieties. Don't be fooled by the flat format.

What to look for: Many wrap breads are white. Look for whole grains and low sugar and sodium

Caveat emptor: Beware high sugar and high sodium content.

Per 2 slice serve (avg 71g): 902kJ
34g carb // 5.5g protein // 1.8g fibre

FRUIT/RAISIN

Bread loaded with fruit (usually sultanas, raisins or orange peel).

What they say: Like a hot cross bun, it doubles as dessert.

What our expert says: The dried fruit in fruit bread makes it particularly high in sugar. Add the fact that the bread itself is often white, meaning it already releases glucose quickly. Toppings that reduce glycaemic index aren't ordinarily paired with fruit bread.

What to look for: Caloric density is generally high, but there are vast differences between brands. Two slices of some brands rival a burger for kJ count, without the satiety factor to curb overall daily intake.

Caveat emptor: Keep for special occasions if you are watching your weight, cravings or blood sugar. Per 2 slice serve (avg 150g): 1,575kJ
69g carb // 13.7g protein // 8.1g fibre

WHITE

White flour bread where the wheat kernel has the germ and bran removed.

What they say: Delicious and adored by children – especially as fairy bread or with honey.

What our expert says: Of all breads, this has the least fibre, B vitamins, zinc and other nutrients. The germ and bran – absent from standard white bread – house the nutrients of the grain.

What to look for: The main things to look for if you are buying white bread (and let's face it, nothing quite works for parsley pinwheel sandwiches or fairy bread like a slice of white) are sodium and sugar. Compare brands' per 100g column and go for the best of a not-so-great bunch.

Caveat emptor: White bread generally results in a greater insulin spike and, potentially, bigger crash with concomitant cravings than varieties that release glucose more slowly. It provides the fewest nutrients per 2 slice serve. Put it on the occasional list – when nothing else will do!

Per 2 slice serve (avg 84g): 870kJ
38.6g carb // 8.0g protein // 2.4g fibre

LOAF À LA CARTE you ARE...

EXPERIENCING BLOOD SUGAR ISSUES OR HYPOGLYCAEMIA

Look for: While wholegrain bread is a winner for blood sugar, research published in the *British Journal of Nutrition* suggested that sourdough may also be a good choice for blood sugar stabilisation. It's thought that perhaps the fermentation of sourdough changes the nature of the starches in bread.

SUFFERING DIGESTIVE ISSUES

Look for: Wholegrain bread for its rich source of fibre, which not only helps to keep you fuller for longer, but helps keep your digestive system moving along nicely. Rye bread is also a good option as it is fibre rich and encourages regular bowel habits.

TRYING TO LOSE WEIGHT

Look for: Choose wholegrain bread if you are on a weight loss plan. The fibre will keep you fuller for longer, leaving less room for hunger spikes and excess calories. Rye bread is another good option as it's dense, meaning you're less likely to overeat it, fibre rich and easy to digest, which can reduce constipation. The sugar is released nice and slowly, keeping blood sugar levels steady. ■

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Allergy-friendly,
vegan and low in fat
and sugar, these cupcakes
and doughnuts are the
ultimate party treats.

Recipes and words:
Jessica Stier // dessertswithbenefits.com

Fit.food

Funfetti Cupcakes & DOUGHNUTS

makes 13

I HAD AN UNHEALTHY OBSESSION WITH FUNFETTI AS A CHILD. IF YOU'RE NOT AU FAIT WITH FUNFETTI, IT'S BASICALLY AN AMALGAM OF VANILLA, CHOCOLATE AND STRAWBERRY BATTER WITH SPRINKLES. UNG. FAST FORWARD A FEW YEARS AND I'M STILL IN LOVE WITH CAKE, BUT NOW I CHANNEL MY AFFECTION INTO CREATING VERSIONS WITHOUT REFINED SUGAR, BLEACHED FLOUR AND TRANS FATS. I ALSO FAVOUR CUPCAKES AND DOUGHNUTS FOR INBUILT PORTION CONTROL. (FOR THE RECORD, I STILL HAVE STRICT CAKE KPI'S — BUTTERY AND MOIST ARE NOT NEGOTIABLE.)

Low-fat // Low-sugar // Gluten-free // Vegan (eggless)

» WHAT YOU'LL NEED «

CUPCAKES/DOUGHNUTS

- » 1 cup brown rice flour
- » 1 cup oat flour
- » 2 tsp baking powder
- » $\frac{1}{2}$ tsp baking soda
- » $\frac{1}{2}$ tsp salt
- » 241 g (1 cup and 1 tbsp) yoghurt**
- » 1 $\frac{1}{4}$ cups unsweetened vanilla almond milk
- » 2 tsp vanilla paste
- » 1 tsp butter flavour
- » 1 tsp stevia extract
- » 1 tsp almond flavour
- » Sugar-free rainbow sprinkles

VANILLA BEAN FROSTING

- » 100 g (1 cup) powdered erythritol
- » 60g (5 tbsp) homemade vanilla sugar, powdered in a food processor
- » $\frac{3}{4}$ tbsp unsweetened vanilla almond milk

VANILLA SUGAR* (MAKE 1 WEEK BEFORE)

- » 4 cups granulated erythritol
- » 3 vanilla beans

» WHAT YOU'LL DO «

CUPCAKES/DOUGHNUTS

- » Preheat oven to 180°C and line 13 cupcake tins with paper or parchment liners or spray doughnut pans with cooking spray.
- » In a small bowl, whisk the brown rice flour, oat flour, baking powder, baking soda and salt.
- » In a large bowl, whisk the yoghurt, almond milk, vanilla, butter flavour, stevia extract and almond flavour.
- » Slowly add the dry ingredients to the wet mixture while stirring and fold the batter together. Last, gently fold the sprinkles into the batter and scoop the batter into the prepared pans. Bake for 20 to 21 minutes or until the surface springs back when tapped.

FROSTING

In a medium-sized bowl, whisk together all the ingredients. Scoop into a piping bag and frost the cupcakes. (For the doughnuts, add one to three tsp more almond milk to thin out the frosting and drizzle it over the donuts). Sprinkle with sprinkles or place a thin layer of sprinkles on a sheet of baking paper and gently dunk the cupcakes or doughnuts.

VANILLA SUGAR

Put the erythritol in a sealable jar. Slice the vanilla beans in half lengthwise and

scrape out the beans with a knife. Add to the erythritol. Chop the vanilla bean pods into chunks and add to the jar. Shake well so that the beans are mixed through. Let sit for a week. Place a fine mesh sieve over a bowl and strain the jar mixture. Gather the vanilla bean chunks and add to a food processor with ½ cup of the erythritol. Grind the mixture until the beans are completely ground and add back to the sugar jar. Add remaining erythritol to the jar and shake again before using.

* You can substitute store bought vanilla sugar.

** Use any yoghurt – soy, Greek, coconut – to suit your taste and food goals. ■

PER CAKE

kJ: 546

Fat: 6 g (2 g sat)

Carb: 20 g

Sugars: 12 g

Protein: 1 g

CATERING TIP: Split your batter into a cupcake and doughnut tin to add interest to your plate.



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Slimming Speed



Can you really eat (or not eat) your way to a bikini body in 12 weeks? Learn to sort fab plans from fad plans.

Words: Madeline Lakos

No amount of squatting or sit-ups will spot reduce from key fat storage sites on a woman's body. "The best you can do is eat healthy, lose weight slowly, exercise to tone your body and learn to accept and love your body," says dietitian and exercise physiologist Gabrielle Maston. Thank big-name fitness programs for cementing the expectation that transforming your body should take 12 weeks – max. Fact is, the physiques of program proprietors – think famous personal trainers, bikini models and fitness models and Instagram babes – weren't built in 12 weeks. Many of them are the result of massive training commitments over months or even years. "Some bikini body plans are marketed to young women who want rapid weight loss – aiming to get as thin as you can, as quick as you can," says Maston, who says summer-slash-bikini-slash-beach body plans are in an urgent league of their own. "Traditional [non-bikini] weight loss plans tend to have more of a health focus; some also look at sustainable longer term weight loss and are not necessarily targeted at young women alone," Maston says. While it seems counterintuitive in the desperate moment mid-swim catalogue flick, setting non-bikini goals, even when what you really want is to rock a neoprene two-piece, can be more successful than doggedly pursuing abs of steel.

Research has shown that goals preoccupied with the physical appearance of health rather than health itself can set you up to fail. A recent study in the *International Journal of Behavioral Nutrition and Physical Activity* called this 'controlled motivation', or feeling like you're dieting and exercising because you have to, and not because you want to. As a result, your bikini-inspired mojo, and thus your results, fizz out pretty fast. "Controlled forms of motivation, which by definition are not autonomous (i.e., they lack volition), are predominant

when the activity is perceived primarily as a means to an end and are typically associated with motives or goals such as improving appearance or receiving a tangible reward," the research says. A more stable source of motivation, they concluded, was intrinsic motivation, i.e. doing an activity because of its inherent satisfactions, stating that "when intrinsically motivated, the person experiences feelings of enjoyment, the exercise of their skills, personal accomplishment, and excitement". This is where the image of collective beachside excitement associated with the latest bikini body plans can earn its stripes. Turns out that photo of little Miss Fit crunching on the sand is functional.

Making diet and exercise fun – or making the process of achieving weight loss and building fitness truly enjoyable for someone who hasn't enjoyed it before – is no mean feat, and many bikini body plans recognise that. Ashy Bines, creator of one the Internet's most popular bikini plans, says, "I want you to be the best version of you that you can be, all while having a blast!" A diet and weight loss plan by any other name may lack the same fun 'girl-power' emotional appeal that 'bikini body challenge' has, something some people need to stick with their goals. Human performance researcher Dr Adam Fraser says successful body transformation hinges on making diet and exercise emotionally appealing. "Emotions drive and contribute to our behaviour. That's the reason why a bride follows a strict diet before the wedding, because she has this real emotional drive to look good on her wedding day," he says. "For me personally, I look after my health and I exercise because I feel better and I have more energy and I get more work done; other people will have to dig deeper to find their triggers, but the key is whatever you're trying to do, make it more emotionally appealing."

Transformation expectations

Twelve weeks seems like a long time, but it pays to be realistic. "If someone is 20 kilos overweight, then 12 weeks is not enough time to achieve the 'bikini body' look, but they will certainly achieve a

significant amount of weight loss during that time," says Maston. And your exercise and diet history will impact progress. "Twelve weeks may be just enough to shift those last five kilos, but the women who will see the best results on these plans are those who already work out. Regular gym goers will have a significant amount of lean muscle already, so by fine-tuning their diet over 12 weeks, you see noticeable muscle definition and that typical bikini body." The danger with setting a tight timeframe such as six or 12 weeks is that it fosters a countdown mentality, which logically segues to extreme measures. If you think you'll achieve better results by severely cutting calories, think again. "Diets used for rapid weight loss are very restrictive and it makes it difficult to maintain that over a long period of time and sometimes people lose motivation and binge-eat," Maston says. A recent study presented by the European Congress on Obesity asked two weight loss groups to consume a very low-calorie diet (VLCD) of 500 calories a day for five weeks, or a low-calorie diet (LCD) of 1,250 calories a day for 12 weeks. Both lost a similar amount of weight, but 18 per cent of the weight lost by the VLCD group was lean muscle mass, which is the stuff you really want to hang on to, compared to only 7.7 per cent in the LCD group. Translation: dropping weight even faster is going to do nothing for your squat booty. And, because lean muscle mass also regulates your metabolism while making you look toned, muscle-wasting weight loss is harder to sustain in the wake of a jeopardised resting metabolic rate, i.e. the energy you burn while sitting on the couch, sleeping, cruising Instagram, etc. The double-whammy is that the body's responses to severe caloric restriction favour long-term weight gain. "Caloric restriction results in acute compensatory changes, including profound reductions in energy expenditure and circulating satiety hormones such as leptin, with increases in ghrelin and appetite, which encourage weight regain," said the author of a University of Melbourne study, Kalpana Priyadarsini Sumithran. For most people, Maston considers rapid weight loss to be losing more than one kilogram per week – so try and set your goals around a weight loss achievement that accounts for this limit.

The Contenders

Different dietary protocols can beget different results, so if your end game is bikini body finesse and 12 weeks or less, your diet is a big deal. "Women tend to be more emotionally connected to food, and eating patterns are often intertwined with body image and self-worth," says Maston. "Because of this it is important to not only work on what you eat, but on your self-esteem and outlook on life; this will teach you to learn why you eat outside of hunger. The best way to achieve sustainable weight loss in 12 weeks or less is a plan that includes all food groups, uses whole foods and encourages positive eating behaviours such as eating mindfully and being kind to yourself."



What's your BIKINI DIET STYLE?

BEST FOR: NON-NEUROTIC TYPES SEEKING TO EXPERIENCE HOW GOOD THEY CAN FEEL

CLEAN EATING: Adored on Instagram and endorsed by celebrities, #cleaneating – or cutting out foods that aren't entirely free of processing or additives – has become synonymous in collective consciousness with slim. While there is no definition prescribing quite what to eat on a 'clean kick', generally eschewing processed, refined foods and packets for fresh, whole produce cooked from scratch is a good benchmark. "Clean eating is good because it teaches you to eat healthy whole foods," says Maston. And you can post on social media while you're doing it. #cleanbikini.

CONDITIONS: "Some clean-eating diets cut out dairy, leaving you calcium deficient," Maston warns. "They've also been known to lead to obsessive eating behaviours and purchasing expensive, unnecessary 'health food' products."

BEST FOR: CONTROL FREAKS WHO WANT TO TRY INTUITIVE EATING

IIFYM: 'If it fits your macros' is gaining traction in the wake of intuitive eating, which while useful for curbing diet obsession and even stemming binge eating, completely ignores macronutrient balance. While it espouses that your body will seek what it needs and that as long as you listen, you'll stay on track, IIFYM adds a little more control, ensuring that you consistently achieve the required caloric deficit (not more or less) and that caloric composition favours fat loss and muscle maintenance. Once you have your total daily energy expenditure sorted, you can apply the math – 40 per cent carbohydrate, 40 per cent protein and 20 per cent fat – and eat whatever you like – so long as it fits. Since the math can be tricky, we recommend a calorie tracker with macro breakdown. "This plan gives you flexibility, because you get to eat what you want," Maston says.

CONDITIONS: "You have to count macros, which is time consuming and not a natural way to eat – it takes the focus on internal cues of hunger to an external counting system," says Maston. The same goes for calorie counting.

BEST FOR: THOSE STUCK IN A CRAVING CYCLE

SUGAR-FREE: The celebrated anti-sugar movement is about removing processed sugars from your diet, which happens to eliminate many processed and refined foods that contribute empty calories. Among sugar-free's (or reduced sugar's) key claims to fame, however, is that by keeping blood sugar stable without the peaks and troughs caused by rapid glucose release, it naturally removes a major trigger for sweet cravings. Reactive hypoglycaemia (otherwise known as 'the crash'), after consuming sugar or carbohydrates with a high-glycaemic index and therefore rapid glucose release into the bloodstream, causes the body to go into emergency mode when insulin clears the sugar from the blood in one clean sweep. The body thinks it needs food and encourages the seeking of the most energy-dense, usable items – which happen to be things like baked goods, cakes and Tim Tams. Even reducing sugar by avoiding added sugars can curb the vicious cycle. A happy fringe benefit is that such peaks and troughs are implicated in diabetes precursor metabolic syndrome.

CONDITIONS: The classic paradox of people gaining weight while going raw or vegan or Paleo applies. Foods that are 'healthy' and made from whole ingredients can be as – or more – energy dense than their refined counterparts. The nuts and seeds favoured for vegan slices, for instance, push calorie counts higher than many standard peers. Chocolate mousse made from avocado may be good for your nails, but don't think it's lower in calories. And don't think the absence of 'sucrose' (the standard name for table sugar) means it doesn't contain something that behaves the same way in the body. While their glycaemic indexes can be lower than those of sucrose, alternative sweeteners such as agave are still basically sugar. "Many no-sugar plans actually still contain sugar, just in a different form. This doesn't make it any healthier if you are baking cakes with sugar alternatives," Maston says. If you are baking desserts, erythritol and Stevia have negligible calories and impact on blood sugar.

BEST FOR: HARDCORE BIKINI DEVOTEES

LOW CARB: There are plenty of versions, from plain old low-carb eating to ketogenic diets. They generally involve seriously reducing carbs – sometimes to under 25 grams a day. While many claim to work by bypassing fat burn saboteur hormone insulin, which spikes higher with simple carbs, most diet pros pin any rapid weight loss on the water weight loss that happens when less glycogen is stored in the muscles and liver. It can cause apparent losses of two kg overnight – and re-gains just as quickly – after rice or potatoes. Ketogenic diets instead force the body to use stored fat for fuel instead of glucose from carbs, so their slower effects are at least real.

CONDITIONS: Maston says the yardstick should be whether you can function optimally on few carbs – since it's self-defeating if you lack the energy to work out. "Some people don't function well on little carbs," she says. "If you experience frequent headaches and tiredness on a low carb diet, chances are it isn't for you." Ketogenic diets are notorious for their 'carb flu' in the first few days and some adherents have reported persistent brain fog and irritability (carbs do enable antidepressant neurotransmitter serotonin to cross the blood-brain barrier, after all).

BEST FOR: SOCIALITES WHO CALL CATERING A DIET STAPLE

'DETOK': Five green juices a day? Nothing but grapefruits? Internal 'cleansing'? Many popular detox methods are either futile for achieving sustained weight loss or indeed work against it. A juicing diet day can quickly add up to near – or even over – your caloric needs, rendering the whole thing a waste of willpower. And diets founded on laxatives only cause water loss.

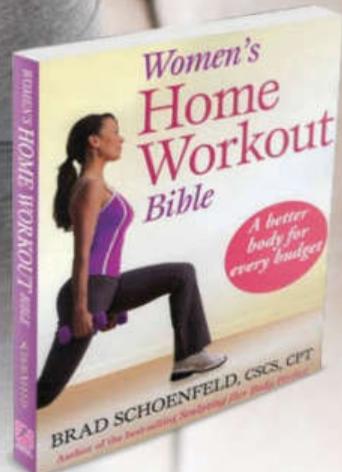
"A detox might make you feel better after a period of binge eating," Maston says. It can also promote a flatter tummy by evading food and drink that causes bloating and irritation – not a bad thing – and help facilitate fluid balance, easing fluid retention, which can be caused by dehydration exacerbated by caffeine. Counterintuitively, the body is wont to hold onto extra water when it's dehydrated, so if a detox encourages you to rehydrate with H2O without the counter-attack of caffeine, you might feel or even be 'lighter'. But 'detoxing' – a marketing-bred term with no formal definition or recognition by the medical industry – isn't going to do much long term. "It is completely unsustainable," says Maston. A major problem with detox is that the dearth of protein facilitates counterproductive catabolism or muscle loss, quickly dropping metabolic rate, setting the perfect conditions for post-diet weight re-gain. The physiological knock-on effects of starvation can also promote a chaotic relationship with food, leading to cycles of under- and overeating as the body strives to return to homeostasis and the mind strikes back at perceived deprivation.

CONDITIONS: If you just want to re-set after a spree of bingeing or processed food rut, favour vegetable juices such as celery and cucumber, and limit fruit to keep sugar and calories down. ■



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ALCO POP

Alcohol is to healthy eating as darts are to balloons. Yet if you do enjoy a celebratory drink or two, there's no reason to go without.

"Often when people have a drink, they are more inclined to be more lenient on their food choices and tend to consume slightly more of the energy-dense foods," Landau says.

Wine light

Makers of wine, cider and beer are quenching demand for drinks delivering fewer calories and less sugar and carbohydrate than standard tipples.

"Low alcohol or light beer and wine contain significantly less alcohol and therefore have less kilojoules," says Landau. Low-calorie wines generally have the sugar reduced through a filtration process.

Low-carb options, on the other hand, may contain as many kJ's as their full-strength peers.

"They actually have similar alcohol and therefore similar kilojoule content to standard beer and wine, so they aren't the better option they are advertised to be," Landau says.

Cider is also deceptively high in sugar and kJ's. "Cider is similar in alcohol strength to beer but has a higher sugar content, so is higher in kilojoules," Landau says. The worst offenders are ready-to-drink cocktails, which can contain comparable sugar and kilojoules to several glasses of bubbly.

While standard versions of mixed drinks are jaw-droppingly energy dense, diluting them with a calorie-free mixer such as diet soft drink, tonic or soda can halve the load.

Alcohol is among the greatest enemies of healthy eating. It's also a notorious suspect in kilo creep. On the surface, the science is simple: alcohol contains calories with no nutritional merit or satiety value. Downing a glass of vino with dinner daily while still meeting your energy requirements through food over the day is sufficient to promote more than 100 g of fat gain per week.

Alcohol contains around 29 kilojoules per gram, so every standard drink contains at least 290 kilojoules, or approximately the same as a fun-sized Mars Bar or a medium apple, and that's before adding the mixer. Two glasses of wine on each of Friday, Saturday and Sunday would net similar effects.

"Sometimes people end up

drinking down more calories in a night than they eat in a whole day," says dietitian and author of *The Clean Separation* Kara Landau. To add insult to injury, wine effectively blocks the body from using the energy consumed in food. "Alcohol is a toxin, which our livers metabolise first, therefore we burn the energy alcohol provides in preference to the energy from the food we have eaten," the DAA said in a statement. Fat metabolism can drop by as much as 73 per cent after just a couple of drinks in the space of an hour according to research published in the *American Journal of Clinical Nutrition*.

But it's booze's effect on dietary choices that really has the potential to derail not only weight but the body's own

homeostatic regulation
(granted, diet soft drinks and coffee have

also been found to disrupt the system). The disinhibiting effect of brain chemistry changes such as increased GABA – a chillout neurotransmitter – makes resisting the deep-fried canapés or drive-thru on the way home a Herculean task. And since many popular alcoholic beverages contain significant proportions of sugar (a bar-size 147 ml glass of white wine contains 1.4 g of sugar according to the United States Department of Agriculture), a preference for energy-dense food once blood sugar drops is probable. A single bar glass amounts to 2.5 to 3.5 per cent of the World Health Organization's recommendation that sugar comprise no more than 10 per cent of a woman's daily calories. For a 1,600-calorie daily quota, 10 per cent equals 40 g of sugar. Worse, according to a Purdue University study, is that alcohol also happens to make salt and fat taste especially good.

RAISE THE BAR

Ready, set, sip!



RED WINE



DRINK	Red wine, dry	Red sparkling	Rosé
VOLUME	160ml glass	120ml glass	120ml glass
kJ	456	407	352
SUGAR	0.6	2.4	2.4
CARBS	2.6	2.4	2.4
ALCOHOL VOL	12%	13g	11%

Portion control is integral to keeping vino on the light side, says Landau. "If you're watching your calorie intake at home, have a 100 ml glass, which is a standard drink – unlike the 150 ml you'll be served at a bar," she says. Most bar drinks are at least one-and-a-half standard drinks. A cunning way to reduce kJs in vino is to dilute it. A 150 ml spritzer made with soda water contains fewer kJs than straight wine.

CIDER DRY/SWEET



DRINK	Dry	Sweet	Clear, light cider
VOLUME	375ml bottle	375ml bottle	355ml bottle
kJ	11.6	829	600
SUGAR	11.6g	25.9g	8.9g
CARBS	11.6g	25.9g	13.1g
ALCOHOL VOL	4.7%	4.7%	5%

Cider is still the hippest summer drink. But think of sweet ciders as confectionery. The level of sweetness is due to how much residual sugar is left in the cider after it is bottled. Dry cider contains fewer kJs per ml than sweet, but despite its acclaim as the beer garden drink du jour, it's neither low in sugar or kJs – and can quickly put you over the blood alcohol limit. "Remember, there's more alcohol in cider than beer and kilojoules in cider are effectively equivalent to two wines – that's quite a large amount of calories in one glass." Clear ciders generally have fewer kJs per serve than coloured.

Like still wine, sparkling wine comes in many guises – from relatively low-sugar, low-cal sparkling to sweet moscato. The heaviest hitter is champagne l'orange, which can contain six g of sugar per 160 ml. If you're looking for clues to drier sparkling wines, look for the term 'Brut'. Moscato refers to a sweeter wine while dulce indicates the pointy end of the sweet spectrum. While sparkling is on calorie-per-volume par with their still contemporaries, the bubbles can serve as portion control. "Most people will find champagne will

White wines wear their hearts on their sleeves. A dry white is usually lower in kJs than a sweet or dessert variety. "If you are going to drink a white wine, keep in mind the dessert and sweet wines tend to have a higher calorie count, but you needn't reach for the driest of the dry either; aim for the middle-range variety," Landau says. Early-harvest or low-calorie wines are also increasingly popular. Most light wines are either made from grapes plucked off vines before they've fully developed their alcohol and sugar content or subject

WHITE WINE



DRINK	Dry riesling	Low-calorie white
VOLUME	160ml glass	150ml glass
kJ	454	306
SUGAR	0.5	0.7g
CARBS	0.5	0.7g
ALCOHOL VOL	12%	8.5%

to a filtration process to remove some of the sugar. Low-calorie wines tend to contain around 8.5 per cent alcohol – significantly less than standard wine's 12 to 13 per cent.

SPIRITS & COCKTAILS



DRINK	Pre-made mojito	Pre-made cosmo	Vodka, fresh lime and soda	Strawberry daiquiri
VOLUME	120ml serve	120ml serve	230ml serve	Cocktail
kJ	674	774	282	670
SUGAR	0g	0g	0g	0g
CARBS	16.3g	22.2g	0g	12g
ALCOHOL VOL	15%	15%	40%	16g

Despite the image of a lithe young thing toting a cosmo, cocktails can contain as many kJs as a meal. Vodka is a lighter choice and works well with juice or soda according to Todd Millar, bar supervisor at Bondi's Chimmi's Rum Cantina (but be aware that added juice can cancel the sugar and kilojoule savings). Soda and a squeeze of lime juice and diet soft drink or cordial will keep a vodka mixer on track. "If you're watching your kilojoule intake, ask for natural flavours and juices instead of syrups; a classic example is fresh lime instead of lime syrup," says Landau. She confirms that clearer liquors contain less sugar and fewer kilojoules. To minimise the hangover,

“Add a non-dairy creamy twist with coconut or almond milk”

CHAMPAGNE/SPARKLING



“Adding fruit juice to sparkling won't rationalise your tipple.”

”

DRINK	Champagne	Moscato	Low-calorie sparkling	Champagne with orange juice
VOLUME	120ml glass	120ml glass	100ml glass	120ml glass
kJ	372	400	165	450
SUGAR	2	14.6	1.7g	6g
CARBS	2	14.6	1.7g	6g
ALCOHOL VOL	12%	5.5%	6%	11.4%

hit their head a little quicker than other alcohols and can therefore take in fewer calories; nevertheless, the calories are still relative for each standard glass of alcohol." Adding fruit juice to sparkling won't rationalise your tipple. Volume for volume, fruit juice – not least, fruit juice with added sugar – is more sugar and energy dense than sparkling wine. Instead, drink sparkling as is, in metered portions. ■



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KRYSTLE WYATT

Krystle Wyatt knows that family comes first; that's why she's decided to make her health a priority.

In early 2013, my mother passed away suddenly. Seven months later, I discovered I was pregnant with my first child. During my pregnancy, I was still dealing with the loss of my mother and didn't focus on healthy eating at all and gained 35 kg. My son was born over 13 weeks premature and with a health condition that saw us in hospital for 166 days, two major operations, countless procedures and him enduring things that no child should have to.

I began working out as a means of stress relief during my son's time in hospital. Training has been a godsend in terms of my emotional, mental and physical health while going through an immense period of stress. I am incredibly passionate about the mental and emotional benefits training provides. As time continued on, my focus shifted to keeping myself as fit and healthy as I could for my son; to be a better

mother and ensure I would be around for years to come. The challenge was a goal to strive towards, assisting in my staying the course and keeping strong when temptation arose.

I had lost 32 kg before the BodyBlitz challenge started. My focus shifted from mainly cardio to weight training to develop tone. I wanted to be inspired go above and beyond the weight loss, health and fitness achievements I had previously accomplished. As a result, I feel more energetic and stronger, I am better equipped to handle emotional stress and more confident within myself. I feel happier with myself; I feel as though I am able to conquer any goal I set.

The one thing that sticks in my mind is how hard it is to be overweight. Physically it's not enjoyable to run or walk long distances because it can be uncomfortable and difficult. I stuck with it, though, and now it's one of the highlights of my day.

On overcoming challenges:

Being a single parent, I have my son the majority of the time, so my training would have to work around his schedule, not so



(H) WHAT I DID:

Monday: Legs
Tuesday: Back and biceps
Wednesday: Legs
Thursday: Chest and arms
Friday: Circuit
Saturday: Run
Sunday: Rest day/pram walk

(F) WHAT I ATE:

Meal 1: Maxine's protein shake with oats and maca
Meal 2: Protein bar
Meal 3: 100 g chicken breast/steak, 100 g sweet potato, salad/vegies
Meal 4: Apple and almonds
Meal 5: 150 g chicken breast/steak, 100 g sweet potato, salad/vegies or stir-fry
Meal 6: Maxine's nighttime protein shake

THE URGE TO EMOTIONALLY EAT WAS QUITE STRONG AT SOME STAGES... BUT REVISITING THE REASONS I DECIDED TO TAKE THE CHALLENGE HELPED A LOT

much mine. I was unable to go to the gym because his health condition meant I couldn't put him in day care or crèche, so I had a little gym set up at home with the basics for equipment. I enlisted the help of a personal trainer to write weekly programs for me to do at home. It was challenging, but they produced the results I wanted – my confidence with what I was doing grew with each weekly progress picture!

On workout motivation:

I don't believe vanity or looking good in itself is a strong enough goal to sustain ongoing training and eating well. Every time I

felt like giving up or stopping, I thought of my mother. Every time I wanted to cut a training session short because I was 'too tired', I thought of family members that were struggling through illness. Every time I wanted to eat something unhealthy, I thought about the little eyes that were watching me, and what sort of example I wanted to provide. I don't want my son to experience losing a parent at an early age, so I will do everything I can to prevent this.

On food swaps:

Prior to this year, I would just eat whatever I felt like at the time. After researching and

becoming more aware of how important nutrition is to both health and weight loss, I began making changes to what I ate on a daily basis. The urge to emotionally eat was quite strong at some stages...but revisiting the reasons I decided to take the challenge helped a lot. Initially it was hard, but my desire to change and to be a better person outweighed any food I could possibly eat.

On treats:

I treated myself by purchasing some new trainers or gym clothes. There are so many non-food treats you can enjoy while doing something like this – I'm just obsessed with fitness gear...and yes, I'm one of those people that live in it!

On measurements:

I am ecstatic with my measurements. I didn't even realise how much of a

difference it was until I held the measuring tape up where it was and now where it is. In my opinion, the measurements are the most important thing!

On goals:

My stepfather was diagnosed with cancer and sadly passed away a week after the challenge ended. Losing my mother at 59 and my stepfather at 58 has given me a heightened awareness of just how important health really is. My next goal is to complete my Master Trainer through the Australian Institute of Fitness, and to continue to train and implement what I learn on myself and to eventually begin helping other people who may have had a tough time of it or just need some guidance in the right direction. If I can do it with everything that has happened, absolutely anyone can. ■



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HOW TO BE... Melissa Ambrosini

Had enough of die-hard health and fitness gurus? Motivational speaker, self-love teacher and author of *Mastering Your Mean Girl* Melissa Ambrosini insists on slowing down, listening to your body and living from the heart.



I usually start my day with 10 to 15 minutes of yoga in my lounge room, just to have a little stretch and open up my body.

Being fit, healthy and strong is very important to me because it makes me feel good and I am all about doing more of what makes me feel good and less of what doesn't. That's the goal! I love going to Barre, Pilates, Yin yoga classes and hiking in nature.

How I exercise changes each day. I tune in to how I am feeling and let my body decide how it wants to move. Gone are the days where I would slog it out for hours at the gym and push my body to look like a Victoria's Secret model. Now I take a more gentle approach, one where my body's intuition leads the way. It's so much more enjoyable that way.

My self-care and health is at the top of my to-do list; it's a non-negotiable for me. It didn't always used to be like that and when it wasn't I felt like crap. It wasn't until I made it a priority and part of my everyday life that I was able to accomplish more because I had so much more energy.

The best way to stick to your goals and stay motivated is to make sure

MELISSA'S TOP TIPS FOR ACHIEVING YOUR HEALTH AND FITNESS GOALS

1. Get crystal clear on what your goals are.
2. Figure out the actions you need to take each day to achieve your goals.
3. Hold yourself accountable each day. Add it to your calendar and to-do list so it actually gets done.
4. And don't forget to reward yourself with your favourite self-love activity, such as a warm bath, a meditation or a cup of herbal tea in the sun.

For more self-love inspiration, download Melissa's Self Love Menu at melissaambrosini.com/products/self-love-menu

your goals are heart-centred. When my goals come from the heart it's not hard to stick to them or to stay motivated – I genuinely want to achieve them. I used to make goals from my head, such as, 'I must lose five kilos in order to fit into my jeans,' but that goal wasn't heart-centred, so I was unmotivated to achieve it. The best way to stick to your goals and stay motivated is to make sure your goals are heart-centred, and to constantly check in with them daily, weekly or monthly and take inspired action steps each day to achieve them.

My favourite place to relax is in the bath, on the beach or in Mother Nature. I also love relaxing by listening to guided meditation or reading in bed.

I don't wear a lot of make-up and when I do I use all organic products – I am very basic when it comes to my beauty routine. One of my favourite things to do for my skin is soak in a bath with Epsom salts, lavender and coconut oil. My skin feels like silk afterwards!

I can't leave the house without essential oils. I always have a few in my handbag.

When I was a kid I wanted to grow up to be a dancer. I started performing when I was three years old and loved it! After I finished high school, I went on to study performing arts and worked as a professional dancer and actress for six years – I am so happy that I got to live out that dream.

The best advice I've ever received was 'just be you' and 'be your own best friend'; two pieces of advice that I never really took on board or let sink in until a lot later in life.

I admire people who live from their heart and follow their dreams. My husband, my soul sisters and entrepreneur powerhouses such as Marie Forleo and Lorna Jane are perfect examples of that. ■

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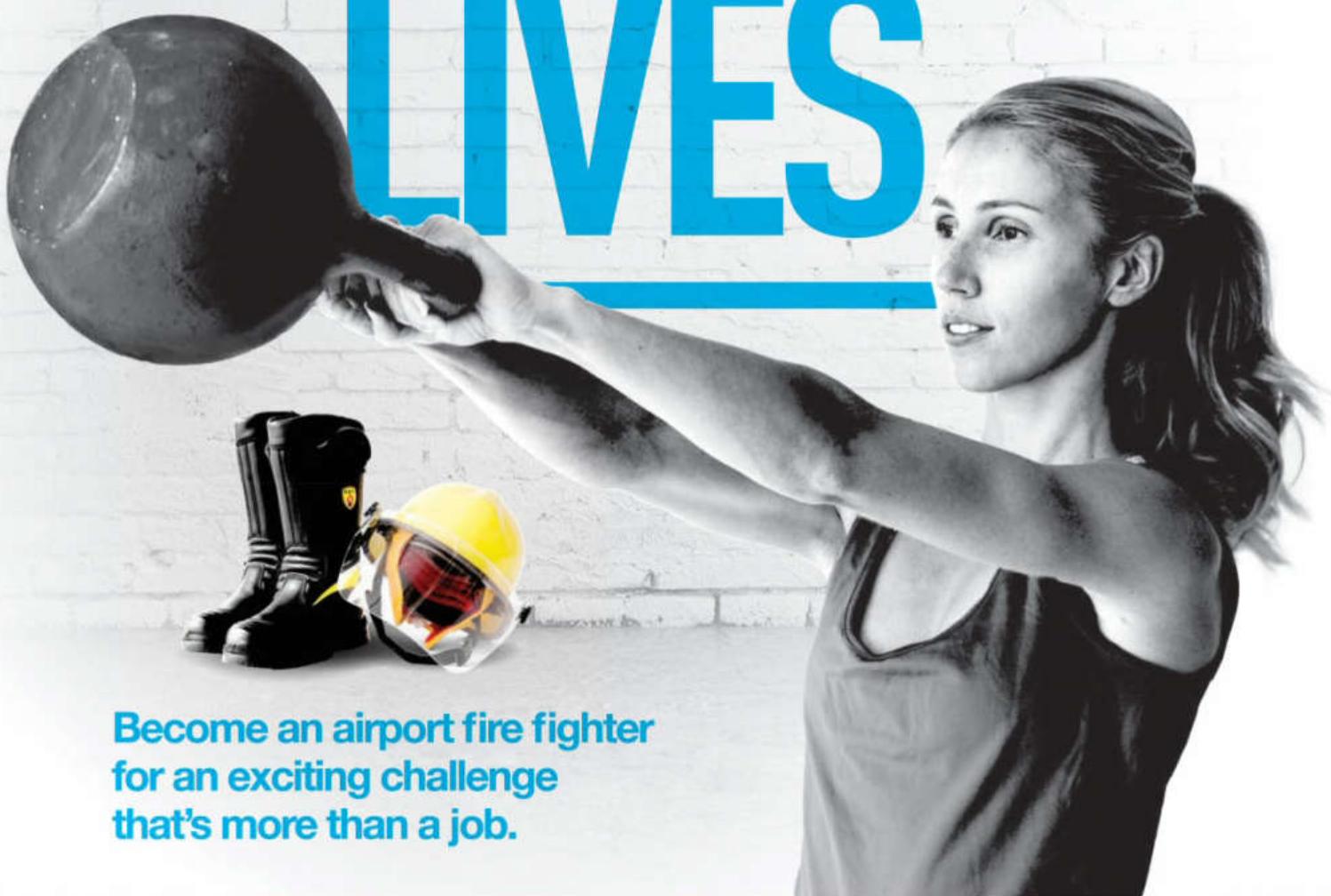
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